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The Right Hon.ble Charles James Fox
Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs

London, Hurst and Blackett, 1865

MEMOIRS

OF THE

COURT AND CABINETS

OF

GEORGE THE THIRD.

FROM ORIGINAL FAMILY DOCUMENTS.

BY

THE DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM AND CHANDOS,
K.G.

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COURT AND CABINETS

OF

GEORGE III.

1806.

NEGOTIATIONS WITH FOX—DEATH OF PITT—GRENVILLE AND FOX ADMINISTRATION—MR. THOMAS GRENVILLE, CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD OF CONTROL, AND FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY—ILLNESS AND DEATH OF FOX—WARLIKE OPERATIONS BY SEA AND LAND.

THE cause of the Allies appeared to have been growing more and more desperate since Mack's surrender. Napoleon was in possession of Vienna on the 11th of November, and on the 2nd of December, Austria was completely overthrown at Austerlitz. Stunned and helpless by this signal reverse, on the 25th of the same month, the Emperor was forced to consent to the treaty of Presburg, which not only deprived him of 1000 square miles of valuable territory, and 3,000,000 of loyal subjects, but rendered him little better than a vassal of the French Empire. The English government had organized one military expedition, a small force under Sir James Craig,

to join a Russian detachment that had landed at Naples in the preceding month of November. The united force, about 3000 English and 4000 Russians, was quite inadequate for the service required; against them, a French army of 60,000 men was speedily marched. The allies presently took to flight; and the only result of the expedition was a decree from Bonaparte, that the Bourbons had ceased to reign in Sicily, and a transfer by him of their forfeited kingdom to his brother Joseph, who took possession of his government in the following February.

The position of Ministers was very far from enviable. The intelligence from abroad displayed their foreign policy in a most unfavourable light. Parliament was about to assemble, and a formidable opposition would gain tenfold strength from the ill-success of the government measures against the great enemy of their country. That they would be able to raise a storm of popular indignation, seemed more than probable; and each member of the administration had reason to anticipate the fate of Lord Melville. Their chief was in a state that prevented their looking to him for support; and deprived of him, they were without energy —almost without life.

The leading Whigs were well aware of the weak position of their opponents, and that their lease of office must very shortly expire. That they might succeed them, scarcely admitted of a question, because there existed no materials for an effective administration in any other quarter. Whether they would succeed them, depended on there being a perfect understanding among themselves, as to certain important questions, it was imperative that they should bring forward;

and, as the Opposition was made up of many elements, some of which it was suspected would never amalgamate with the rest, grave doubts were entertained whether they could exercise administrative functions without running the risk of speedy dissolution. These doubts were entertained by no one more strongly than by Lord Grenville; and, seeing in some members of his party a spirit totally at variance both with his feelings and convictions, he was far from eager to take advantage of the helplessness of the Tories in office, or sanguine as to the result of introducing a Whig ministry in their place.

It was in this peculiar state of things that the new year —which Providence had ordained to be one of great events—commenced. During the Christmas season, the Marquis of Buckingham had lavished the hospitality of Stowe upon the exiled royal family of France. But both Lord Grenville, and his brother Thomas, had remained at Dropmore, watching with equal anxiety and interest the political barometer. Of the correspondence about to be printed, the opening communication refers to continental news; and then comes the real business of the hour—the urgent necessity of an agreement between the Grenvilles, and the influential leader of the party they had joined. The letter of Mr. Fox, which follows, opens the case; and though it commences with a gratuitous claim for foresight, and contains some deductions that are not precisely logical, it offers a distinct basis for a joint action. The reply discountenances that favourite resource of Opposition orators—an amendment to the Address at the opening of parliament; in other respects it is diplomatically vague. It is to the subsequent exposition of Lord Gren-

ville's feelings and opinions, that we particularly desire to direct attention. As usual, every idea bears the impress of that honesty of nature which distinguished the writer among his contemporaries. He knew the material out of which it was expected he should shape a fair and durable edifice, and did not attempt to disguise the difficulties of the undertaking. There was another feature in his position, which increased his disinclination to maintain it. This was the exhibition of party rancour that characterized the proceedings of certain members of the Opposition, who chose to display ultra-liberal sentiments in the most ultra-illiberal fashion. The prosecution of Lord Melville was on the eve of being carried out on a scale as grand as the result was insignificant; and just as in that of Warren Hastings, it appeared to be a pretence for establishing a public circus, in which a band of oratorical gladiators were to attack a minister, to whom was accorded nothing beyond the privilege of the arena—the right to defend himself as well as he could against all his assailants.

Mr. Fox, there is no doubt, had already become deeply influenced by the manly sincerity of Lord Grenville's character, so that when Mr. Thomas Grenville came to elicit the grounds of difference that were supposed to separate their opinions, he ascertained that none existed; that distinguished man avowing such sentiments as enabled Lord Grenville to act with him without the slightest abandonment of principle. Communications were at once exchanged, that laid the foundation of a perfect understanding.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Dropmore, Jan. 3, 1806.

We are all stunned with the continental news. What is to become of our troops? and if we lose them, where are we to get together another army. This is a melancholy Christmas to your poor French Princes, whom all your hospitality and kindness will hardly console for this final overthrow of all their hopes.

MR. T. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Dropmore, Jan. 6, 1806.

My dearest Brother,

I enclose to you a letter which I have just received from Fox, together with a copy of my answer to it. The point in question is likely to be attended with such important consequences, that Lord Grenville agrees with me in expressing the most earnest wish that you and Lord Spencer would be in town by the 16th or 17th, at latest, in order that we may come to that full and complete explanation with Fox, which the present circumstances seem to make so necessary.

If the course of our conduct, even from the very first day of the Session, must, in some measure refer to the more or less hopes of possible agreement with Fox (if there should be any question of forming at any time such a government), it appears to me that this is the moment for a full and unreserved explanation to take place between Lord Grenville and him, in order that we and they may distinctly know what their respective opinions are, and whether there is such essential difference in their sentiments as to preclude the hope of their agreeing in Cabinet, if the time was come for entertaining such a proposition.

My own single and individual opinion was, that we ought to have been restrained from attacking Ministers upon the war, while that was pending, from the apprehension that such attacks might in

some degree impede or obstruct the chances which remained to the country, of success in that tremendous contest; now that the war is ended, those motives of forbearance cease to operate with me; and I find in my own individual opinions no reason to induce me to suspend an attack upon the Ministers for a course of conduct which appears to me to be, upon many points questionable, and upon some indefensible. My brother is disposed to agree, much more than I do, with Ministers, upon the time of their commencing the war, and certainly sees the whole of their conduct in a less blameable light than I do, though upon the question of Italian co-operation, he does not foresee how they can well defend themselves; but the prevailing doubt in his mind as to present co-operation with Fox, arises from his suspecting that they differ too widely in their views of what is now fitting to be done, and therefore the pressing and immediate necessity is to bring that point to issue by explanation. For every reason, therefore, we must depend on seeing you and Lord Spencer in London on the 16th or 17th, and I will beg you to send this letter and enclosures over to Althorp before you return them to me.

MR. FOX TO MR. THOMAS GRENVILLE.

St. Anne's Hill, Jan. 3.

DEAR GRENVILLE,

Perhaps you are now convinced that there might be something worse than even a rickety peace. However, I will not triumph too much on my foresight. But surely as ideas of encouraging or discouraging continental war, for the present, are not now in question, you can none of you have any objection to attacking the Ministry for this, ill-timed as I say, but certainly ill-connected, and ill-managed campaign; and then, after having neglected Venice and Trieste, the invasion of Naples at the end of it! Pray, pray consider this question, all of you, abstractedly, as far

as you can, from former discussions. The cases are wholly dissimilar, and the more a man is inclined to continental alliances, the more resentment he ought to feel against those who have extinguished every hope of renewing them to any advantage; the more a man feels the desireableness of lowering the power of France, the more indignation ought he to feel against those who have so enormously aggrandized her.

I shall go to Holland House on Tuesday, for a few days, (Nelson's funeral, which I shall attend, included,) then return here, and be in town the 17th at latest. Perhaps on the day before or after the funeral I may have a chance of seeing either you or your brother, or both. I have done all I can for an attendance, and hope you will have done so too, for even if we cannot quite agree in our language on the first day, business will immediately follow in which there can be no difference. I will endeavour to sketch something of an amendment between this and Wednesday.

Yours ever,
C. J. Fox.

I hear a rumour of Pitt's going out, but I do not believe it though the authority for it is not contemptible.

MR. T. GRENVILLE TO MR. FOX.

Dropmore, Jan. 6, 1806.

MY DEAR CHARLES,

You have given much more credit for activity both to myself and brother than we are entitled to, when you suppose us to be on our road towards London, either on Wednesday or on Friday next; in truth we have not had any idea of attending Lord Nelson's funeral, on the 9th, and my brother is too much hampered with different engagements here to enable him to move from hence to London till the 16th. I am glad to see that you propose being

in town either on that day or on the 17th, when my brother, and you can meet either in Oxford Street, or Arlington Street, for the purpose of talking over at large, the important and extensive topics which arise out of the present times. I must not, however, conceal from you, that upon the subject of amendment to the address, my brother continues to be, more than some of his own friends are, disinclined to the idea of amendment to the address, and disposed to think that it will be most for the advantage of all parties, to speak their general opinions on the first day without the limitations or managements which would naturally belong to the debate of an amendment that was likely to lead to a division.

Ever most truly and sincerely yours,

T. G.

P.S. I have not the smallest faith in the report which you have heard of Pitt's intended resignation, whatever may be the authority on which it is founded.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Dropmore, Jan. 7, 1806.

MY DEAREST BROTHER,

I see with deep concern, though without any degree of surprise, that the impression which all these calamities creates, must lead to increasing the divisions of the country, and lighting up with fresh fury the flames of party violence.

I know not how to defend myself, step by step, against the bent of all my friends whom I most love, and whom I regret to see hurrying on in this course, from which I can prognosticate nothing but ruin to themselves and to the country. I have no hope that I can stem the torrent. It is not reasonable to expect that so many persons of judgment and experience quite equal to my own, should give way to impressions which I only seem to feel; and I have no other desire than to be released, in some

shape or other, from the most painful of all situations, that of being always doing enough to dissatisfy my own mind, and always too little to satisfy theirs.

I never had from the beginning any other object than that of uniting the leading parties, and healing the distractions of the country, being even then convinced that all the talents and exertions of all the public men of the country, were not more than sufficient to meet the dangers that threatened us. This hope is now desperate; firstly, by the great misconduct of Pitt, who might have realized it, but refused to do so; and secondly, by the violence of my own friends, some of whom (Fox's party) never wished the thing to succeed; and others feel so much resentment at its failure, as to be ready to overlook the danger of the country, in their view of making war against its administration.

With this view of things, what can I do, or what ought I to do? and, above all, how can I be going on, day after day, discussing with those who agree with me in none of these feelings, the shades of expressions in an amendment, or the minute differences of this or that motion?

Besides, what is all this to lead to? I had last year a precise object in view—that of forming such a government as might have saved the country by the union of its parties. That is now impossible. If then, after a struggle that shall tear the country to pieces, we now make it impossible for Pitt to carry on the government, who is to succeed? Another experiment of shreds and patches like Addington's, to be composed of Hawkesburys and Castlereaghs; will that mend our case? a joint government of Fox's friends and ours, who the very first day we meet in Cabinet, shall probably differ on the leading question of our whole policy—that of resistance or submission? or, lastly, which, indeed, is the only thing probable, a separate government of the Foxites reinforced by the Addingtons for the purpose of pursuing their peace system? in which I, very pos-

sibly mistaken, but certainly sincere in my conclusions, continue to see nothing but a ruin more certain, and more rapidly accelerated than can come upon us by any possible military disasters, even by defeats in our own country.

You know I always have used myself to open my mind to yours without reserve. Here is the picture of it. A gloomy and desponding view it certainly is, that I entertain of public affairs. I have long done so, and if it were any satisfaction to have foreseen justly the course in which the operation of the passions and interest which govern the parties of this country, were bringing on its ruin, that satisfaction to be sure I should enjoy. But can I with these feelings lend myself as an instrument to inflame all those passions already roused to such reciprocal violence, and to perpetuate the very distractions to which I attribute all our evils?

I do not want a written answer to this plain exposition of my sentiments, but only beg you to weigh them seriously and deliberately in your mind before we come to town; when I trust we shall enter into a larger consideration than that of the words of any particular amendment, or the personal merit or demerit of any one individual, and shall temperately discuss what it is that men ought to do, who see the dangers of their country, or their sources in the light that is here stated; and if on the result of this discussion it should be proved that my opinions do fundamentally differ from those of all my friends, I have too much and too just a deference for them to act against them, but may I not then be released from the painful situation of a continued difference with them in private, and with myself in public?

MR. T. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Charles Street, Jan. 12, 1806.

MY DEAREST BROTHER,

You will be very glad to hear that, agreeably to my suggestion,

I went and passed Saturday alone with Fox, at St. Anne's, and had an opportunity of talking very much at large with him upon the grounds of uneasiness and anxiety, which had arisen in reference to the opinions which he (Fox) was supposed to hold, of the necessity of immediately making propositions for peace, &c., &c.

I was very agreeably relieved from the pain of this conversation by finding the state of his language and sentiments to be in no respect of the description which had been suspected; he said he thought that one of the great charges against the present Ministers, was that they had made it utterly impossible for the country in the present moment to take any steps for obtaining peace, for that nothing was in his mind more impossible than for Great Britain, under the present circumstances, to make any propositions or take any step to express a wish to be included in the Austrian negotiations. He says, that if he believed in any such difference of opinions between Lord Grenville and him as might, or ought to make their acting in a joint Cabinet difficult or improper, he should undoubtedly regret it, but should not deny it; but that under the present circumstances he feels confident that there could be no difference between them as to future measures, and that the only point of difference relates to what is already past, namely, that in the month of August last, he should not have advised the trying the force of Austria and Russia, whereas Lord Grenville most probably would; but that as to the necessity of future measures, he does not fear any difference of opinion—he himself hardly knowing whether in this case we can hope to make any such peace as we ought, and being quite sure that to demonstrate a desire for it now would not be the way to obtain it, even if it can at all be obtained. I have had, as you will believe, great pleasure in relieving Lord Grenville's mind by my account of this conversation, and he seems perfectly satisfied now that their conference on Friday next will confirm his present disposition to think that there will be no difficulty between them. All

this, Lord Grenville knew from me before he saw Wellesley. He will write to you to-morrow. All the accounts of Pitt induce me to doubt if it can be possible that he can attend on the 21st, but I hear the parliament will certainly meet.

Quarter-past Five, p.m.

I open my letter to say that a bird has just whispered to me that Fox yesterday sent an answer to Lord Grenville's letter, most cordially consenting to his proposition, and expressing the greatest possible pleasure and satisfaction at it. I cannot doubt of the truth of this in the way in which it is told me; but is it not comical that of two notes which I have just had from Lord Grenville, one about Adamson, and the other about Fox, he does not utter a word.

I am sorry to have to add, that I am told Fox, in his letter, says he writes in great pain.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Camelford House, Jan. 3, 1806.

My dearest Brother,

I was engaged the whole of yesterday morning with Wellesley, and was therefore obliged to request Tom to state to you, in general, the results of his conversation in his way to town; which certainly was much more satisfactory than we had, as I thought, reason to expect, and tends to relieve very considerably, if not wholly to remove, many of the difficulties and embarrassments which I stated to you in my last letter.

The paper tells me you come to town on the 17th. If so, you will, I trust, dine here, and you shall meet nobody but Tom. There is much speculation here on the state of Pitt's health, which is said, however, to be mending, but he is still so weak as to leave hardly any prospect of his attending at the opening of the Session.

I shall have seen Fox in the morning of the 17th, and I hope to find the same dispositions as his language to Tom seemed to indicate. The great points on which I feel anxious are, the principles of continental system, and of resistance to France. These two must be kept high, and not only not decried, but maintained and insisted upon.

In the present moment, the first is a speculative question only, for there cannot just now be any practical co-operation with us on the continent; but it is not the less necessary to teach the country, that this is still the thing to which we must look as to the only means of solid security. As to the second point also, I doubt whether, if it were a thing to be wished, Bonaparte would ever grant us any peace on any terms short of actual and immediate destruction.

The language of the friends of government is, I hear, that so far from having precipitated Austria into the contest, they can prove that they used much endeavour to keep her back.

If Dardin is at Stowe, pray beg him to send me Campbell's address, or to write to him to desire him to call upon me.

Parliament opened on the 21st of January by commission, the King's speech being read by the Lord Chancellor. The Minister was absent as well as the sovereign; and it was well known that he was too ill to attend. A knowledge of his indisposition prevented a stormy debate on the address, and there was no amendment. On the 23rd, when the members proceeded to St. James's to present their address, the Minister died.

The death of such a man as William Pitt, must have been a national loss at any time—at the present critical period, the loss of a statesman of such extraordinary resources, of such gigantic energy, and of such vast experience,

was a most serious deprivation. He may have committed faults, it is likely that he was occasionally mistaken, but he had given unquestionable evidence of his genius for government, and no one could doubt his patriotism, or his integrity. The pilot had weathered the most frightful storm that had ever assailed the British constitution, and the recollections of his eminent services on this, and other occasions, ought to have obliterated the record of those minor errors into which he had more recently fallen. Unfortunately some of his political opponents had no memory for his benefits, and no charity for his failings; for when, on the 27th of the month, a motion was made in the house by Mr. Lascelles, praying his Majesty to allow a proper mark of respect to be paid to the remains of so distinguished a public servant, several members rose to oppose the proposition. Even Fox, though he acknowledged his departed rival to have been as disinterested a character as ever filled so high a situation, was against the idea of awarding public honours to a Minister whose measures, he affirmed, had been unfortunate to his country. Better feelings prevailed, and the motion was carried by 258 to 89. The Grenvilles, it is scarcely necessary to state, had no share in these petty demonstrations. They attended the public funeral which took place on the 22nd of February—Lord Grenville among the assistant mourners, the Marquis of Buckingham, Earl Temple, and Mr. Thomas Grenville among the deceased statesman's immediate relatives; and in the vast crowd that joined in that imposing ceremony, few were so sincere in their sorrow for his loss.

Weeks before this event, however, arrangements had been completed for supplying his loss. The whole country must have acknowledged that a more satisfactory successor could not have been found—this honour having been accorded by universal consent among the Whigs, to Lord Grenville. Negotiations were entered into with the ablest men of the party to constitute a new ministry, the King's consent to the formation of which was secured by an understanding that Lord Sidmouth should be included in the arrangement.

Lord Grenville had previously held the post of Auditor of the Exchequer, which his want of fortune prevented his surrendering. The difficulty mentioned in his note below, was got over by Mr. Fox, on the 4th of February, bringing in a bill to enable Lord Grenville to execute the office by deputy, while holding the situation of First Lord of the Treasury, to which the royal assent was given by commission, on the 7th of the same month. It will be seen by a subsequent letter, that a difficulty presented itself during the formation of the new ministry by the interposition of the Prince of Wales, who took a great deal of pains to create an impression of his paramount influence in the administration, while making upon the Minister what Lord Grenville pronounces, "the most unreasonable of all demands."

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Camelford House, Jan. 30, 1806.

MY DEAREST BROTHER,

Nothing is yet finally decided on as to this difficulty. The idea of a bill had appeared to me the best expedient, if any

expedient must be resorted to; but there are evidently very considerable objections to this, and my own mind very strongly inclines to revert to the arrangement of putting the Treasury in the hands of Lord Spencer and Tom, a plan from which I most heartily wish I had never been persuaded to depart.

In this state, I have been obliged to defer waiting on the King till to-morrow; but it cannot be put off longer; and the thing must therefore be decided one way or other, in the course of the day.

Ever yours,

G.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Camelford House, Feb. 4, 1806.

My dearest Brother,

You well know what extreme reluctance I must feel to the opposing any difficulties in the way of an object in which the Prince of Wales condescends to interest himself. But, in truth, I have already given to this subject the fullest and most anxious consideration. The objections which I feel to the appointment of Mr. Calcraft have no reference to the character or situation of that gentleman, who, I doubt not is worthy of every confidence, and to whom the best recommendation would be the interest which his Royal Highness is so good as to take in his behalf; nor do they depend on the particular arrangement which I have made, or had it in contemplation to make, for the individuals whom I have looked to for that office. What I feel as absolutely indispensable both to my own comfort, and my own honour is, that in the most confidential of all situations, I should have the assistance of a person in whom, from former habits and acquaintance, I can at once and entirely confide.

Mr. Vansittart was a perfect stranger to me; and the reasons which led me to think of his appointment have already been truly

stated by you to the Prince; but I neither could have agreed to that nomination, nor could I ever have entertained, for an instant, the idea of undertaking (as I did most unwillingly) the office I now hold, except under the persuasion that the choice of the secretaries of the Treasury was after that to be left entirely to myself, to be regulated, not merely by the comparative merit of the individuals, but by the degree of previous confidence which former knowledge might lead me to repose in them.

Of Mr. Harrison I know nothing, but I learn that his situation is very considerably inferior to that of the two other secretaries both in rank and in emolument, is not tenable with parliament, and is rather the station of a first clerk than that of a joint secretary.

I have gone into this long detail in order that you may be enabled to satisfy his Royal Highness both that you have fully executed the orders with which he was pleased to charge you, and also that nothing but the most cogent reasons, such as I have here stated to you, could induce me to express any reluctance to comply with what I know to be so much desired by his Royal Highness.

Ever, my dear brother,
Most affectionately yours,
GRENVILLE.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Camelford House, Feb. 4, 1806.

MY DEAREST BROTHER,

I send you a long manifesto on the subject of this most unreasonable of all demands. I am afraid you must have the trouble of reading it to his Royal Highness, but do not leave it with him.

This persecution obliges me to adhere to the arrangement for putting King there. I had almost settled it so as to make room

for Fremantle, but I must now close it as soon as I can. Possibly some means may arise hereafter of giving King his retreat, and putting the other there, which I believe would be the better arrangement, but which I cannot hazard now.

The first appointments appeared in the "Gazette" for February 5th, by which Lord Sidmouth became Keeper of the Privy Seal, in place of the Earl of Westmoreland. Lord Henry Petty (Marquis of Lansdowne) Chancellor of the Exchequer. Earl Spencer and Mr. Wyndham, Secretaries of State in place of Lords Hawkesbury and Castlereagh. Lord Auckland, President of the Council, and Earl Temple Vice-President. Mr. Erskine was ennobled and succeeded Lord Eldon as Lord Chancellor, and Mr. Fox, Lord Mulgrave, as Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. On the following day, Lord Moira was gazetted Master-General of the Ordnance, vice Lord Chatham, and General Fitzpatrick, Secretary at War, in the place of Mr. W. Dundas.

On the 11th, the following appointments were announced. Lord Grenville, vice Mr. Pitt; Lord Henry Petty, vice Louvaine, Viscount Althorp, vice Lord Fitzharris; Mr. Wickham, vice Mr. Long; and Mr. Courtenay, vice the Marquis of Blandford, to be Commissioners for executing the office of Treasurers to his Majesty's Exchequer. The Lords of the Admiralty were Mr. Charles Grey, Sir Philip Stephens, Bart., Admiral Markham, Admiral Sir Charles Maurice Pole, Bart. Sir Harry Neale, Bart., Lord William Russell and Lord Kensington, in place of Lord Barham, Admiral Gambier, Admiral Patten, Sir E. Nepean, Mr. Dickenson, jun., and

Lord Garlies. Lord Minto took the place of Lord Castlereagh, Earl Spencer that of Lord Hawkesbury, Mr. Wyndham that of Lord Mulgrave, Mr. Fox that of Mr. Pitt, Lord Henry Petty that of Mr. Wallace, Viscount Morpeth that of Lord Dunlo, with Messrs. Addington and Sullivan became Commissioners for the management of the affairs of India; and the Earl of Carnarvon was appointed Master of the Horse, in place of the Marquis of Hertford.

On the 12th, Mr. Piggott was appointed Attorney-General, in place of Mr. Perceval, and Sir Samuel Romilly, who had just received the honour of knighthood, Solicitor-General, vice Sir Vicary Gibbs. The Duke of Bedford was appointed Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, in place of the Earl of Hardwicke; the Earl of Derby became Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, vice Lord Harrowby; and Earl Moira, Constable of the Tower and Lord-Lieutenant of the Tower Hamlets, vice the Marquis Cornwallis, recently deceased.

On the 15th, Mr. Sheridan was appointed Treasurer of the Navy, in the place of Mr. Canning. Mr. Calcraft, Clerk of the Ordnance; the Earls of Buckinghamshire and Carysfort, Postmasters-General, in place of the Duke of Montrose and Lord C. Spencer. Earl Temple, Lord John Townshend, Paymasters-General of the Forces, in place of Mr. Rose and Lord C. Somerset; Lord Charles Spencer, Master of the Mint, in place of Earl Bathurst; and Mr. Alexander Davison, Treasurer of the Ordnance.

On the 18th, Mr. John McMahon, was gazetted Keeper of the Stores, and Lord Robert Spencer, Surveyor-

General of Woods, Parks, Forests, and Chases, vice Lord Glenbervie.

On the 19th, Earl Fitzwilliam was named Lord President of the Privy Council, vice Earl Camden; the Earl of Albemarle, Master of the Buck Hounds, in place of Earl Sandwich, and Lord St. John, Captain of the Pensioners, vice Viscount Falmouth. There were also several creations of peers and baronets, and some minor appointments.

It will be seen from this list, that very few of the ultra Whigs were admitted into the administration. Fox held the direction of the foreign policy of the country, and Sheridan was appointed Treasurer of the Navy. Mr. Wyndham was Secretary for the Colonies, and though he brought to his office more talent for business than both the preceding, certain peculiarities of judgment and temper prevented his making a much better statesman.

While the ministry was being formed, a good deal of jealousy was exhibited amongst the minor leaders of the party. Sheridan is described as getting drunk at Lord Cowper's and speaking slightingly of Fox,* and it is not improbable that Fox drunk or sober, may have returned Sheridan's slights with interest; for the latter had no seat in the Cabinet, and the office for which he was gazetted appears to have been bestowed with reluctance. The absence from the ministry of so able a man as the Marquis Wellesley, who had just returned from India, is accounted for by the fact that certain members of the popular party, with the countenance of Mr. Fox, were intent on framing

* Horner's "Memoirs and Correspondence."

heavy charges against his Indian administration, which rendered him inadmissable. The government, however, did not need talent; indeed, its chief claim to confidence consisted in its being an apparent amalgamation of all that was available in the country. Lord Sidmouth, even, had a capacity within certain limits, and probably understood his duties better than some of his coadjutors of higher reputation; and he introduced into the Cabinet an able friend, Lord Ellenborough, who soon shared with him the King's favour. Of all the appointments, the legal ones were then considered most satisfactory; that of Sir Samuel Romilly* could not have been improved upon. Talent, therefore, the administration had in abundance; but something more was wanting to make it a good working government—cohesion, identity of objects, and warm and steadfast support from the sovereign, which it had not.

Mr. Wyndham's letter is eminently characteristic of that gentleman when in office.

MR. WYNDHAM TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Pall Mall, Feb. 19, 1806.

My dear Lord,

I deferred writing, thinking that Captain Blackwood, who

* The Prince of Wales assured Romilly, through Colonel M'Mahon, that he owed his appointment to his influence with Lord Grenville and Mr. Fox. His Royal Highness did certainly recommend some persons for office in their administration, but no trace has been met with of his interposition in this instance. Erskine's appointment, according to the same authority, had previously been offered to Mansfield and Ellenborough, which the former is said to have declined on account of age, and the latter because he preferred the dignity he possessed of Chief Justice of the King's Bench.—*Memoirs of the Life of Sir Samuel Romilly.* Edited by his Sons, Vol. II., p. 134-5.

had desired to see me, might have had something to communicate. There can be no doubt, that a point on which you had been instrumental in misleading any one, must have been a point on which you had been misled yourself. Cooke's information, as the event has shown, was in both instances wrong; and no time having been left to set it right, the inconvenience happened, which I referred to. I merely mentioned the fact as a reason for proceeding in future with less precipitation.

With respect to the main question, the only circumstance that could, by its nature, make any difference in my wishes, was the odd conduct of Sir William Young, who at the moment when he thought himself Governor of Dominica, (preparatory to his becoming Governor of St. Vincent's) by my appointment, never thought it necessary, when we met, to make the slightest expression of acknowledgment. I remember, indeed, your saying obligingly, that you wished to consider his appointment as a personal favour to yourself; and so far it may be true, that in proportion as anything is placed to the account of favour towards one person, it must be withdrawn from that of another. But these things are seldom construed so strictly; and it is not common that a person removing from another post to anything so valuable as the Government of Dominica, as, in the circumstances, was Sir W. Young, should studiously avoid to manifest the slightest token of feeling obliged for it.

No difference, however, is in fact, made by this circumstance in my desire to comply with your wishes; though it may diminish, in some degree, the further gratification which I should have had in serving one whom you justly describe as among my oldest friends. But as a friend of yours, I shall be still ready to serve Sir W. Young; though I am fearful of making so hazardous a promise as that of giving to any one the first government that falls, when it is impossible to say what that government may be, or in what circumstances the vacancy may happen. You will perceive that this reserve puts by no

hopes that Sir W. Young was ever authorized to entertain. A particular vacancy happened (or was supposed to have happened), and he was immediately recommended. But there had been no question of appointing him to the first government that should fall.

It does not appear to me either, how the difference of a promise more or less direct, makes much difference as to Sir William Young's seat. However direct the promise, the appointment must always remain uncertain, from the uncertainty of a vacancy.

I feel uncomfortable indeed, at thinking how much by my own seat I am standing in the way, and trespassing upon the accommodation, which, in a manner so perfectly friendly, you have continued to afford me. I must not allow this to continue longer than I can possibly help it; but in failure of other means must call upon Lord Grenville for some of those which government, in the course of things, must have at its disposal, leaving to you what it is so desirable at all times, but particularly in the case of a reverse, that you should have the free use of. An exchange of this sort could make no difference in my sense of your kindness, manifested alike in manner as in substance, nor of the extreme convenience which I have hitherto derived from it. The more sensible I am of this kindness, the more reluctant I must be to trespass upon it a moment longer than is absolutely necessary.

Ever, my dear Lord,
Yours most truly and faithfully.
W. WYNDHAM.

THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM TO MR. WYNDHAM.

Buckingham House, Feb. 19, 1806.

DEAR SIR,

I have just received your letter, and in the first place I beg to

inform you that by a letter from my Cornish steward, I am informed that your election for St. Mawes was to come on as yesterday, and that the writ would be forwarded to you according to my directions by post-office express, that no delay might occur as to your taking your seat.

I beg you to believe me sensible in the strongest terms to the kindness of your expressions towards me, and regret sincerely that the gratification which you felt at complying with my earnest and anxious request in favour of Sir W. Young, for the government of Dominica, as preparatory for the government of St. Vincent, should have been checked by the want of acknowledgment on his part to you. But in justice to him, I must conclude that there must have been some misapprehension on this subject, and probably he, at the epoch to which you point, might not have considered his appointment concluded, for I know that he felt strongly sensible to that proof of your old friendship, though (as you correctly state) I felt and acknowledged this arrangement as a kindness to me.

With respect to his future hopes, I will take care that he shall know the decision which you have made, on which, for obvious reasons, I do not offer a single word, except of regrets for the trouble I have given you in this matter; and if my wish to set you right in your view of my request "for the first West India Government," of which I only spoke as conceiving that the first that would open (viz., the one now actually vacant) might naturally and easily make an arrangement either directly, or in its consequences for Sir. W. Young.

I am, dear Sir,

Your very faithful and obedient servant.

N. B.

It will be seen from the following note, that Lord Grenville's office was very far from being a sinecure. The labour he underwent was, however, of minor consideration

compared with the embarrassments which the absence of a common bond of sympathy and interest in his ministry, occasioned him. The subsequent communication of the Marquis Wellesley, opens to view one of these. The Impeachment Committee against Lord Melville, which was still sitting, had created an appetite for this kind of sport. On the 10th of March, Mr. Johnstone commenced an attack on the late Governor-General of India, which Mr. (afterwards Sir Philip) Francis seconded as a means of dilating upon the importance of his own services to the East India Company. Lord Temple defended the Marquis Wellesley, and Mr. Fox appeared to disapprove of the manner in which he had been mentioned. On the following day, Mr. Paull renewed the attack on the same pretence of moving for papers; and Earl Temple, with increased spirit, renewed the defence. On the 17th and 19th, further papers were demanded, and further charges advanced. After this, the assailants of the Marquis gave him a little rest. On the 18th of April, Mr. Paull moved for more papers; on the 23rd, Mr. Sheridan for the discharge of an order that had been passed for printing a charge against the Marquis, and handled Mr. Paull with considerable severity for his share in that transaction. This did not silence Mr. Paull; for, on the 28th, he moved the reading of the charge, in which among others, he was supported by Mr. Wyndham, and less openly, by Mr. Fox, and was spiritedly opposed by the brother of the Marquis, *Sir Arthur Wellesley*. Mr. Paull withdrew his motion, and rested from his labours for another month.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Tuesday Morning.

My dearest Brother,

I am this morning, like every morning, occupied uninterruptedly from this hour to that of my going to the House of Lords: first, by a meeting to devise new taxes in lieu of our unfortunate iron; then by a Treasury board; and then by a meeting with the Duke of York, to settle, finally, I hope, the army estimates; every article of which I have been obliged to battle, inch by inch, with him, at the waste of two or three hours a morning.

If, as I hope, the House of Lords does not keep me later than eight or nine, I will call upon you after it is over this evening.

THE MARQUIS WELLESLEY TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Park Lane, March 12, 1806.

My dear Lord,

I am deeply sensible of your kindness, which has never abated during any period of my life, and which has always been much enhanced in my estimation by my high sense of your justice, honour, and public spirit.

It is difficult, in my judgment, even *now*, to form any clear opinion of the probable course of the proceedings depending in parliament, or of the intentions of government, or of the ultimate result of attacks, which, however idle and groundless, are favoured by the state of parties, and by the temper of the times. I confess that I have not learnt from any authority that Mr. Fox has made any satisfactory declaration of his sentiments respecting my conduct in the government of India, although I should conjecture, from some recent events, that he is not, *at present*, disposed to support *directly* the charges which have been

preferred in the House of Commons. Whatever may be his intentions, or the vicissitudes of public affairs, I entertain no doubt that I shall ultimately compel the public to understand the miserable delusions which have been practised upon their judgment; and that I shall obtain, from the rest of the world, and from posterity, whatever portion of justice may be withheld from me by this country in the present times.

To you, my dear Lord, and to Lord Temple, I am indebted for a species of support, the recollection of which will ever constitute a great part of the happiness and honour of my future life. I am particularly gratified by Lord Temple's very kind and able exertion in the House of Commons last night. You will be happy to hear that I learn, from many persons who were present, that he spoke not only with great spirit, but with very considerable ability and effect.

I am extremely flattered by your expressions respecting the dinner which the Indian civil and military officers propose to give to me. Your presence will be a great advantage; but I would not trouble you to make such a sacrifice as to come to Park Lane, although I shall be most happy to meet you at Willis's.

I return you many thanks for your obliging invitation to meet the new Ministers on Sunday. No objection occurs to my mind against such a meeting; and, indeed, I could never object to meet at your house any person whom you thought fit to receive. But I happen, unfortunately, to be engaged to dine with Lord Camden on that day (Sunday, 16th), and as the engagement is of long date, I fear that I shall not be able to avoid it. If, however, I should be at liberty, I will certainly attend you.

Ever, my dear Lord,

Yours most affectionately,

WELLESLEY.

Lord Grenville's confidence in the strong government he had formed, received some severe shocks before he had been long in office. His patriotism was of a totally different character to that assumed by some of his coadjutors, whose reputation arising from it was their sole political capital, and his qualifications as a statesman were not less genuine and liberal. He, therefore, accepted his position with a perfect knowledge of its responsibilities, and an earnest desire to satisfy its demands, whatever might be their extent. He had no crotchets to force into notice, no prejudices to develop, no egotism to cultivate at the expense of his country and of his colleagues. He did not profess to be a statesman by inspiration, but had learnt his duties in a laborious school, and was intent on giving a legitimate application to his studies. His chief errors were want of confidence in his own sterling qualifications, and over-confidence in the brilliant professions of some of his associates. That his disappointment was bitter when he discovered the extent of his delusion, there can be no question; but there were other causes of unpleasantness, beside the displays of empty pretension and miserable selfishness, that arose around him. His forgetfulness of his own interests was extended to the interests of persons who were nearest and dearest to him. This appears to have given offence; and to the accumulated disagreableness of his position, was now added the want of cordiality with a relative, whom he regarded with the tenderest affection. His reply is exquisitely touching. Rarely has a noble nature been so severely tried; still more rarely has such a nature endured this severe ordeal with a more creditable result. While

reading this admirable letter, the genius of the statesman gains increased lustre from the human foil upon which it is set. Diplomatists are not expected particularly to cultivate their feelings, and Ministers are believed to be thoroughly independent of sentiment; but here is a First Lord of the Treasury developing the best sympathies of humanity; a political leader reversing the censure of the poet—giving up to mankind what it was customary to surrender to party..

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Downing Street, May 9, 1806.

My dearest Brother,

It would be useless for me to attempt to describe either the pain or the astonishment with which I received your letter this morning. These are the first fruits of that unfortunate resolution which I adopted at your urgent solicitation, and my brother's, contrary to my own earnest wishes and better judgment. Twenty years of anxiety and misery might have taught me, and had taught me, what was to follow from it, but my only confidence was in the affection of my few friends, and of my nearest and dearest relations. This has now failed me, and if I ask myself why, I am utterly and totally at a loss to answer.

You speak to me of a change of manner; I know of none, nor could I have thought that at our time of life, and after thirty years of such intercourse as we have enjoyed, it could be necessary for me to watch what effect incessant vexation and fatigue produced upon my manner towards my brother. My visits at your house have been fewer than when I had my whole time to myself. Is this a fault, or a misfortune to me? I considered it as the latter, but I think your own feelings for me, as well as for the country, would have made you regret instead of rejoicing, if when I have occupation pressing upon me for forty-eight hours out of every twenty-four, I had added to the

mass of business daily falling in arrear, by visits for the purpose (I really should have hoped an unnecessary one) of convincing my own brother, and that brother you! that my head was not so turned with my situation as to lead me at near fifty years old to forget those whose affection I have cherished all my life, and to whom I never have ceased to acknowledge the greatest obligations.

Now, as to want of communication and state secrets, and not stating to you day by day all that passed about this man or that being called to the Cabinet. Let me speak to you fairly and plainly. I am conscious of no concealment, I had nothing to conceal, I never courted the task which was cast upon me. Nothing but your wishes and my brother's—I repeat it, for it is absolutely and positively true, and I appeal to that God who now sees me write this—nothing else has prevented me from doing long since, what I shall now certainly do the very first instant I can do it with honour, withdrawing myself altogether from a scene and course of life which I detest, and in which I cannot but too plainly see it will be impossible for me to maintain the only thing I do value in life, which is the affection of my friends and relations, and most of all that of my brothers.

What can I say to these things, if you do not put the answer, and not only do not put the answer, but think it possible to call upon me to make one? Nothing—I can say nothing but that if such were your feelings, I have and shall every day of my life have fresh cause to regret that I knew them not, for that knowledge also would have been sufficient to turn the scale decidedly against what I was doing.

This I have been obliged to say in my own justification. To dwell farther on these subjects would be unnecessarily painful to us both. Let me therefore, now in the language, not of a minister, but of a brother, beseech you not to embitter our intercourse, or to destroy your happiness, and add to my misery, by suspicions

of intentional change of conduct towards you, which are and ever must be totally unfounded. I hope the time is not distant when we shall cease to have political subjects to discuss; because certainly after your letter of to-day, and with other things now passing here, to which you are not a party, I cannot conceal from myself, that my continuance where I am, can do no good to anybody, and will only destroy my own happiness without object or motive of any sort. In the meantime, let us, in the affection of brothers (which on my part has never been interrupted or suspended for a moment in the whole course of my life,) forget for the moment that one of us has had the misfortune to accept stations for which he is totally unqualified, and let me cultivate in the peace of private life that happiness which it is but too manifest public life can never leave me. As soon as it is possible, and but barely possible for me to do it, I shall place myself again in circumstances in which neither my manner, nor the number of my visits, nor any drudgery to which I am subjected, can lead you to doubt whether the first, almost the only gratification of my life is not the cultivating the affection of my brothers; and in which I shall above all be totally freed from that which I now feel it impossible to execute, the task of discussing with those whose objects are much nearer to my heart than my own (if indeed I had any objects) whether my conduct either does or does not prove the sincerity of that feeling.

God bless you, my dearest brother. Return me that unfortunate mass of folly to which you probably did not recollect that I stand in the light of a parent, for I have no other copy; and once for all believe that nothing ever can alter my long, constant and uninterrupted and warm and grateful affection to you.

Saltash, named in the next letter, was one of the boroughs in which the Marquis of Buckingham had sufficient influence to secure the return of a representative nominated by himself.

LORD HOWICK TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Admiralty, May 31, 1806.

My dear Lord,

I desired Lord Temple to communicate to your Lordship what had passed between Fox and me, on the subject of Saltash; but I cannot help expressing to you the satisfaction which I personally feel at the manner in which this business has been settled. I will give directions to Mr. Tucker to communicate freely with Mr. Mansel on the measures to be pursued; but I should wish any ostensible step to be deferred till Fox has had an opportunity of speaking to Sir William Lennox and his brother.

I am, my dear Lord,

Yours most faithfully,

Howick.

Shortly after Mr. Fox had commenced the duties of his office as Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, he received a proposal from a Frenchman to assassinate the Emperor Napoleon, notice of which he lost no time in forwarding to Paris, with becoming sentiments of indignation. Talleyrand, to whose thousand and one political artifices this incident is suspected to belong, made the conduct of Mr. Fox known to the Emperor, and appeared to see in it an opening for a treaty of peace between the two countries. As Napoleon professed great admiration for the English Minister, and the latter was a warm admirer of the Emperor of France, the suggestion was well received by both parties, and, in a short time, Lord Yarmouth, one of those luckless tourists who had been detained in France since the breaking out of the war, was instructed to remain at Paris, and ascertain on what terms the French government was disposed

to treat. Like many other equally trustworthy persons employed on a similar business, he proved no match for Talleyrand, and much time was wasted in fruitless negotiations, with which that modern Machiavelli alternately amused and deluded the English ambassador, as well as an agent from Russia, M. D'Oubril, who was also in Paris, apparently with a pacific purpose.

Napoleon never seemed more sincere than on the present occasion; and to prove the earnestness of his desire for peace with England, he at first professed to be not only willing to allow her to retain her most important conquests, but offered to restore Hanover, which he had not very long since presented to Prussia.

The professions of Mr. Fox had been so conspicuously pacific, that the Emperor considered, when the former became an influential member of the British government, that he had a secure friend. Under this impression, many imperial compliments were paid him; in particular, he was publicly designated as "one of the men who seem expressly made to feel the really grand and beautiful in all things." But, fortunately for this country, Mr. Fox, the leader of the Opposition, and the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs—Mr. Fox, the eloquent denouncer of a rival's war policy, and one of the most popular exponents of a warlike administration—Mr. Fox, the enthusiastic admirer of the Emperor Napoleon, and the ministerial coadjutor of Lord Grenville, proved two distinct persons.

As we have shown, before his ministry was formed, Lord Grenville had come to an understanding with the

great Whig leader, as to his sentiments respecting the designs of Napoleon, and did not meet with much difficulty in getting him to regard them from his own point of view. When, therefore, proposals of peace were again put forward by the French government, the English, Minister to whom they were referred, made it sufficiently clear to the sharp-sighted ruler of France, that he was not likely to gain through Mr. Fox the advantages he had anticipated. Napoleon found that the Englishman, who had so comprehensive a sense of the grand and beautiful, would insist on including within its scope the interests of his country. He felt that the cautious diplomatist of 1806 was not his incautious guest of 1804, and might have doubted whether his objects were less easy of attainment when submitted to Lord Grenville in 1800.

A serious illness which, about this time, affected Mr. Fox, was made the ostensible cause of protracting the preliminary communications between the representatives of the two powers. While, however, Talleyrand was playing Russia against England, then England against Russia, and finessing with his usual dexterity; other negotiations were going on among other governments, that were likely to create a considerable change in the existing aspect of affairs; and Prussia, goaded by an accumulation of insults, seemed inclined to make a manly effort to retrieve her humiliations.

Lord Grenville appears to have looked on these proceedings with little confidence and less hope. He was indefatigable in performing the duties of his office, but did not conceal from himself the little prospect that existed of

his carrying on such a government as he directed, to those great results he had anticipated from the combination of talent in which he had placed his trust for the salvation of his country. Doubtful as was the administrative advantage he derived from the labours of his distinguished coadjutor, who held the department of Foreign Affairs, his reputation gave a popularity to their measures, which, in their position, the Ministry could ill afford to be deprived. Secret intrigues had commenced within their own camp, which, with the open assaults of such leaders of opposition as Lord Castlereagh and Mr. Canning, could not fail to produce a sense of insecurity in men who so thoroughly knew their position, as the writers of the following letters. The tone of the Marquis of Buckingham's communication to his son, and that of Mr. Grenville to Lord Temple, indicate the source of Lord Grenville's chief perplexity. Subsequent communications place the reader in possession of the arrangements for meeting the most pressing embarrassments of his government.

MR. T. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Charles Street, June 26, 1806.

MY DEAREST BROTHER,

I have just received the enclosed note from Lord G., which is all that I know about Fox. I take it for granted that his present illness has prevented any farther discussion with him, so that I presume there will be nothing farther to hear till he is better. The town continues to be occupied about Montagu House; and Mr. Wilbraham's arrival from Lord Yarmouth at Paris, is, as I believe, a fact well established, although the oracle of to-day most stoutly denies it.

A letter has come from Penbedew, expressing a wish that the Dean had done more, and that Miss Y. had said more; but not the most distant hint of any supplementary suggestions from the Major, or his wife. Little Adamson has begged so hard for ever so little, that I have begged for him of Lord G.

THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM TO EARL TEMPLE.

June 26.

Nothing can be more unpleasant than the situation you describe, and the picture you draw, which from various other circumstances, I am persuaded is correct. Lord Grenville clearly does not mean to throw away the scabbard, and the person to whom you advert, probably, has sense enough to perceive that disposition, and to encourage it for obvious reasons. He probably, however, does not know that there is much more under the cards than he is aware of, and till certain matters now at issue are disposed of, I am persuaded that nothing will be done of the various points that press. When your attention was called to a certain subject, it was nearer in Lord Grenville's mind than it is now; consequently, he was more anxious to employ any *Carpenter* that would assist him. But within the last fourteen days, all these questions have become subordinate to one of greater and more immediate and pressing importance, which you will easily imagine, but which I cannot state in this letter.

Scotland is clearly gone either to Lord Melville, who has rehoisted his standard there, or to Lord Lauderdale, who is ready to hoist any flag except Lord Grenville's, in that parliamentary contest; but this is (as I have often told you) no reason with me for not doing what is right, on that matter in which I fear that we can look to no positive good, but only to a choice of most serious and most revolting difficulties, in which I will fairly own, that I do not see my way.

You, perhaps, do not know (and it seems ridiculous that I should be writing news to you) that Fox is very seriously ill, and that his state of health does influence, as certainly in every way it ought, the questions of the present day. Perhaps, a few days may give a little more light on these clouds.

It is probable that under these circumstances the matter upon which you took a book and a letter from my room in Pall Mall will be suspended by Lord Grenville till it is too late; but at all events you must in justice to yourself, and to the writer of that letter, who is now with you in London, bring Lord Grenville to a decisive answer, on the proposition made by him (Lord Grenville) to me, viz., that this man by you should conduct that district. Perhaps it may be more easy to you to shake it wholly off your shoulders; but that you know the consequence of it would be that Lord Grenville could find no other shoulders on which he could lay that burthen. At all events, you cannot, for every reason, engage with the half confidence of which you speak.

MR. T. GRENVILLE TO EARL TEMPLE.

Sunday Morning, Ten o'Clock.

My dear Lord Temple,

I am very sorry indeed to hear so unpromising a report of your brother's present state of mind, particularly after Lord Grenville's letter, which I own I thought must have satisfied him that there was no intentional neglect of him, and that Lord Grenville would not continue any political pursuits, at the expense of seeing that they created sources of difference between your father and him.

I am afraid that your father is very little founded in considering what Lord Grenville says upon this subject as a menace of intimidation; I am for my own part, firmly persuaded that no consideration, public or private, will induce Lord Grenville to continue in government, if he sees your father's mind irrevocably confirmed in the unfavourable impressions which you describe

as having still such strong possession of his feelings. The difficulty of the present state of things, as it respects both the public and our own family, must naturally press very heavily upon your feelings; but great evils must be met by active and persevering exertions, and those I am persuaded will not be spared either by you or by me, upon this distressing subject.

Yours ever, most affectionately.

T. G.

MR. T. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Charles Street, June 27, 1806.

DEAREST BROTHER,

I continue to be in a state of great anxiety as to the result of Fox's health. The pain of which I spoke to you, I have reason to know, is attributed entirely to the pressure of the water upon the muscles and nerves. They are giving him squills and diuretics; but I was shocked to be told in confidence, that if this does not produce relief, they must come to scarification, which in his habit of body, sounds like a dreadful experiment. If there was more vigour in his constitution, it might absorb the water, but there is reason to fear that a scirrhus liver has produced this dropsical appearance, and, therefore, it is the more difficult to flatter one's self with the means of his being restored to strength; at the same time there is no reason for absolute despair, though the grounds of hope are not sufficient to give sanguine confidence. What is to happen if he is incapacitated from public business? The state of the House of Commons, and the course of public opinion, is more than anybody can know how to speculate upon.

Lord Temple told me this morning that Fox's note to my brother, was very cordial respecting me, and expressed all I told you yesterday; but Lord Spencer thinks he means to ask for Lauderdale in Cabinet, though he has not as yet. Lord Grenville

just sends to beg me to dine alone with him, so that I shall now hear what has passed.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Downing Street, June 28, 1806, 6 p.m.

MY DEAREST BROTHER,

I am this moment returned from Fox's, where we have finally arranged that Lord Minto is to go to India, and Tom to succeed him at the India Board with the Cabinet. Lord Minto will be proposed to the Directors on Monday, and I suppose there is no doubt of their acquiescence; and I shall mention Tom to the King, either by letter Monday or Tuesday night, or when I see him on Wednesday, and I imagine the sooner his writ is moved, the better. Fox is certainly in a very bad way; the danger is not immediate, but I fear the chance of ultimate recovery cannot be great.

MR. T. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

June 28, 1806.

DEAREST BROTHER,

Fox had a good night, and is gone out this morning for a little air, in his carriage. Lauderdale saw Lord Grenville yesterday, and expressed some desire to have the Great Seal of State without loss of time. Lord Grenville told him he only waited to hear from Fox finally, and it should be done. Lauderdale remarked that Fox would not be able to write, but that he, Lauderdale, would go and talk to Fox about it, to obtain his final consent. Lord Grenville agreed to this, and wrote a note by Lauderdale to Fox yesterday morning, to say that the appointment of Lord Minto should be notified to the Directors this morning, and the Great Seal should be given this morning to Lauderdale, unless Lord Grenville heard to the contrary from Fox. Late last night, Fox sent a message to Lord Grenville, to beg him to do nothing

finally till he, Fox, had seen Lord Grenville, which he would do *this day, at* 5. This interview, therefore, may very possibly be to propose Lauderdale for the Cabinet, or it may be to propose Whitbread for Board of Control; but all these are mere guesses which I shall probably know more of to-night or to-morrow morning, and when I do, I will write to you.

Lord Howick, whom I met this morning, told me that the best that could happen was that Fox's danger was not quite so immediate, but that he must fairly say he thought it was totally out of the question that Fox should ever attend the House of Commons again. I told him in that case, the only chance left was for him to take the lead in the House. He spoke doubtfully of his means for this, and justly observed that the state of his father's health made that arrangement not worth three month's purchase.

The state and prospects of the government were still regarded with anxiety by the Grenvilles, and they are clearly defined in the following communication. The project of placing Mr. Thomas Grenville at the head of the India Board would have been approved by any one acquainted with his talent for business, and integrity; but like his brother, Lord Grenville, he always entertained a modest opinion of his own qualifications. The sense of duty was paramount with both.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Downing Street, June 29, 1806.

My dearest Brother,

Lord Minto has been this day recommended to the Directors, and the other nomination will be mentioned to the King, Wednesday. Fox's state of health is such as gives no hopes of the possibility of his ever resuming his place in the House of Commons;

and I confess I have no belief that he can recover from the present attack, though he may possibly linger on under it for some months.

This of course gives rise to the most anxious speculations as to the future state of the government.

1. Will the King wish to go on with us, when he may look now with such confident hopes to the success of such an arrangement as he wished for in February, but then could not effect?

2. If he wished it, can we go on, and how? considering the state of the House of Commons, and the difficulty of transacting business there without the aid of Fox, and with so little reason to reckon upon that of Lord Howick, who may from day to day be called up to the House of Lords?

3. If we cannot go on alone, can we disunite opposition, and treat with some of them, to the exclusion of others, or,

4. Is it better to treat with them altogether, or to battle it with them altogether?

All these are great, and some of them difficult questions; and before it is long, I shall hope for some opportunity of talking them over with Tom and you at Dropmore, as soon as you are capable of so much exertion.

In the meantime, we are endeavouring (but it is no easy task) to get our business through the House of Commons. I trust, however, we shall prorogue about to-day or to-morrow fortnight.

I should be gloomy, indeed, if I could think as you do about a peace such as you describe. Truly, that or worse would be better than hopeless war.

MR. T. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Charles Street, June 30, 1806.

MY DEAREST BROTHER,

I am unable to send you as yet any intelligence respecting the writ. I presume it cannot be talked of till after Lord Minto shall have been both recommended to the Directors, and approved

of by them; but so soon as I hear of anything decisive, I will not fail to send you the earliest intelligence as to those subjects to which your note alludes, as topics that I shall not be allowed to talk of hereafter. You know very well that I do not easily admit of objections to the secret discussions of confidential friends; I have always found advantage myself in communication with those whom I know I can trust; and what I see of the consequences of severe reserve in those who practise it, does not impress me with the belief that *in its extreme*, it can ever contribute to public advantage or private happiness; and with this persuasion it does not appear probable that, in your person, I should first make this ungracious and unpromising experiment. I think I agree pretty generally with what you have written, as to the necessary consequences of this unexpected calamity which is hanging over us. The state of the House of Commons under those new circumstances is one that is not easy to speculate upon as to its ultimate result; because, though I agree that, for the present the solution of exchange of offices to which you have adverted, is the natural solution to look to, yet that is probably, a very temporary resource, and is a resource which, in the course of nature, may very likely be defeated before the very next session of parliament shall meet; and you will not fail to observe that if Fox should be well enough to hold, without his coming to the House, the resource as to the House cannot take place with the three seals at once in it. The prospect upon the whole is full of disquietude, because the whole machine is likely to be so set loose, that it is a mere chance to guess at what may arrive.

For myself, you know that I have always thought that where it is imagined that I can be of any use, I can have no negative. I do not, therefore, mean to shrink from any reasonable use that can be made of me; but, in plain and sincere truth, besides the real distrust which I have of that which you allude to being found practicable when tried, I am very strongly persuaded that my health and strength will never bear the trial. As far, however,

as I am concerned, I will make no difficulties; but the difficulties, will probably unmake me.

MR. T. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Charles Street, July 3, 1806.

My dearest Brother,

I am just now informed by Lord Grenville, that he proposed to the King yesterday, and obtained the royal consent to the new arrangement of the Governor-General, and of the President of the Board of Control, which latter was approved in very gracious expressions. The formal nomination of Lord Minto by the Directors takes place on Wednesday next, on which day Lord Grenville proposes that my writ should be moved, which will give time for the re-election before the prorogation, as they do not expect to prorogue before Wednesday se'nnight.

The accounts of Fox have been considerably better these two last days, as the medicines have operated as kindly as could have been desired; there has been too a total absence of that pain in the thighs, which had been attributed to the pressure of water. After all one must not be too sanguine in a disorder of so threatening a description, but under that bad disorder, it is something to have gained ground for two successive days, and the most desponding of his friends begin now to entertain hope of his overcoming this attack; if this should fortunately happen, there are three or four months rest to look about before the next Session; much must be looked at indeed, with the apprehension of Fox being unable to attend, and of Lord Howick being called away by his father's death. In the meantime, the present opposition are exulting in their success, and their language among one another, is that of mutual congratulation upon the inevitable failure of the present government. Lord Melville is now their acknowledged chief, and his motion on East India papers, will be a censure of the recall of Sir G.

Barlow, for the purpose of Lord Melville's taking a declared lead of the discontents which are to be worked up in Leadenhall Street.

MR. T. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Charles Street, July 5, 1806.

DEAREST BROTHER,

William has fled to Dropmore to-day, before I could see him, so that I know not definitively whether the moving of my writ still stands for Wednesday; but if any alteration happens, you shall be apprised in due time. I presume that they cannot prorogue quite so soon, because I find that Wyndham has still to bring in a short bill for the rank of volunteer officers, and although the Opposition do not now make formidable divisions in point of numbers, yet they hang heavily upon all these military measures, and certainly will not lose any opportunity of inflaming the volunteers against Wyndham, through the medium of parliamentary debates. They certainly take all advantages, whether due or undue; they have made common cause with the Princess, with whom they dined first at Blackheath, and afterwards at Lady Townshend's; and a great party is expected to go to applaud her at the opera, where she is to appear to-night. The Prince is persuaded that great pains are taken to inflame the public mind against him upon this subject.

Fox is said to have had a more quiet night and very little pain, but I imagine by what I hear, that there is very little real difference; the prospect in the House of Commons, as it will be affected by his illness, and by the probability of Grey's peerage, is full of uncertainty at the best. I think it more discouraging than my brother does, and whatever of it can depend upon me, depends upon a frame of body that will never stand the severe attendance of long nights in the House of Commons. How it will end, I know not.

The allusion to the Princess of Wales in the last note, renders it necessary to state that the irregularities of her Royal Highness had become so prominent, that an inquiry into certain charges of improper conduct that necessarily arose out of them, was forced upon the government. Some interesting details respecting this inquiry may be found in the Diary of Sir Samuel Romilly, who took a prominent part in it, from its commencement to its conclusion. His opinion of the conduct of the Princess clearly justifies the proceedings of Lord Grenville's government. The letter her Royal Highness subsequently addressed to the King, in answer to the report of the four Lords of the Privy Council, appears to have been the joint production of her principal legal advisers—Plumer and Perceval.

The King, however, desiring it to be as private as possible, the examination of witnesses was commenced in the house of Lord Grenville, under the direction of Lord Chancellor Erskine, Lord Ellenborough, Sir Samuel Romilly, and Lords Spencer and Grenville, on the 31st of May, and continued nearly to the close of the following month. The evidence of criminality was not conclusive, though that of gross misconduct was. Nevertheless, the Princess played the character of an injured woman with immense energy, and the Opposition, to whom a popular appeal was a god-send, from whatever source it came, gave her Royal Highness's very loud complaints the advantage of their strenuous support, as an indirect way of attacking the Ministry who had sanctioned her alleged persecution. It should not be forgotten that a few years later, the present zealous friends of the Princess carried on a "deli-

cate investigation" respecting her Royal Highness, of a much more searching character.

The correspondence of the remainder of the month dwells chiefly upon the arrangements which the critical state of Mr. Fox forced upon the government. The state of the negotiations in Paris was not such as would induce a prudent Minister to relax his warlike preparations. This may account for the more frequent reference to distinguished military commanders. But, as may be gathered from the note of the 15th July, the Grenvilles were not averse to an honourable peace, which is in direct opposition to the assertions of M. Thiers.

THE EARL OF BUCKINGHAMSHIRE TO MR. THOMAS GRENVILLE.

Roehampton, July 5, 1806.

My Dear Sir,

Lord Castlereagh, knowing the friendship that has long subsisted between Sir John Craddock and myself, having transmitted to me the enclosed letter, I take the liberty of putting it into your hands, and without having to press his application, I can venture to assure you, that in the event of his being obliged to return home from his command at Madras, he will not only have to lament the disappointment of those expectations with which he left Europe, but will also have suffered considerable pecuniary loss.

With the advantages of a good understanding, and acknowledged military talents, assisted by the experience he must by this time have acquired of the service in India, I have a full persuasion that he would be found thoroughly competent to the situation of Commander-in-chief, and I should hope you would

be of opinion that, under the circumstances stated, he is not without strong pretensions to that appointment.

I have the honour to be,

My dear Sir, most faithfully yours.

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE.

MR. T. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Charles Street, July 8, 1806.

MY DEAREST BROTHER,

Fox was described as rather better yesterday, and Lord Spencer saw him wheeling about in his garden; he thought him cheerful in his conversation and manner, but his face appeared to Lord Spencer to be much more drawn than it was ten days ago, when he saw him last. Grey and Lord Holland appear not to flatter themselves with any good hopes, although no immediate danger seems to be apprehended. If illness should force him to resign, my expectation is, that he, with all his friends, will be anxious that Lord Holland should succeed to his department, and if Grey could be sure of permanently remaining in the House of Commons, that arrangement might do, but Lord Grey is turned of seventy-eight, and in January last was hourly expected to die, which makes his son's tenure in the House of Commons so uncertain, as to leave daily doubt and anxiety about any arrangement which stands on so precarious a footing; nor are these difficulties lessened by all the peculiar impracticabilities of the Military Secretary of State; so that upon the whole you must not wonder at my recurring in all my letters, to the almost insurmountable difficulties which hang upon that great wheel of the state carriage, called the House of Commons.

I have great application made for the appointment of private secretary, which is £300 per annum; young Golding, who was seven years confidentially with Lord Wellesley in India, has strong recommendations in some respects, and is much pressed. If

Shipley had been ours, and was not in the army, and was resident with his wife in London, I might naturally have thought of that; but at present it would not answer for him to quit his profession for a small salary, and an expensive residence in London, even if he was grown our nephew.

MR. T. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Charles Street, July 11, 1806.

My dearest Brother,

The assistance which young Golding will be enabled to give by his employment in confidential situations in India for four years, and his immediate connexion by marriage with Sir G. Barlow, have induced me to decide for trying him as private secretary, though I know not whether he would prove a transferable commodity, if in future any occasion shall arise.

I take possession of the office on Monday, but Lord Minto probably will not go to India till the first week of October; he finds a son there, but takes neither wife nor son with him. Colonel Drinkwater goes with him as his military secretary. What you read in the papers of Miranda's failure, is supposed to be true, but we have no other account than the public have. I cannot say I shall be very sorry for his failure, for I am no great friend or partisan to the project of revolutionizing Spanish America.*

Fox was not so well yesterday, but is better to-day. His last airing, however, fatigued him so much more than the same airing did a week ago, that he does not go out again. I am afraid this is but too strong evidence of increased weakness.

It is expected that Mildmay will move thanks to the volunteers to-day, and that Wyndham will oppose it. So much the worse.

* This opinion is a complete answer to the accusations that have been brought forward of the eagerness of the Grenvilles for South American expeditions.

MR. T. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Tuesday, July 15, 1806.

My dearest Brother,

Fox is certainly looking better in features, and thinking better of himself, and judged better by the medical people, but not enough better to give one, upon so interesting a topic, any real confidence. In case of his retirement, the difficulties would be incalculable. The most obvious course is for Lord Howick to change with Lord Spencer, and to lead the House of Commons; but then, even if that would do, at his father's age it would last a short time, and then we should all be set afloat again. I would do whatever my friends demand of me, but I have no belief that my bodily strength can last great parliamentary fatigues.

I have almost determined Lord Grenville to take Fremantle instead of King, and I believe Lord Grenville will write to you about it as an experiment that he will try. If Fremantle will set to work thoroughly, he may do it well; but the house in Stanhope Street does not seem to suit the hard labours of a Secretary of Treasury. Nevertheless I am inclined to think it the best, and that it will be tried. It is no small inducement, in addition, that you will naturally wish it; and I now hope it will be done.

I am sure your ideas and mine agree about peace; but I know not that the ideas of Bonaparte will be the same. If we cannot purchase a *secure* peace, we are little justified in giving what we hold to obtain a nominal peace; but if it could be made without *present loss,* I do not know that in abstaining from war, we lose upon the whole, any such advantage as justifies the cost and risk of it.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Downing Street, July 17, 1806.

My dearest Brother,

I have taken the resolution to-day to send to Fremantle to offer him that he shall take King's situation, under an understanding that he takes it upon trial, and that he is not to be hurt if I should at any time hereafter be obliged to say to him frankly, that I find it does not go on satisfactorily. This reserve I feel necessary, because I cannot help doubting whether, when the novelty of the thing is once over, he will be able to bring his mind to so much unpleasant drudgery as the situation must necessarily require.

In this state of things, I hope it will not be inconvenient to you to bring him in for St. Mawes, in the room of Sir William Young, whose appointment will now immediately take place. I shall have, indeed, a vacancy to dispose of for the Irish borough, for which King now sits, but I should much wish to be able to keep this for Lord Percy, whom I have offered the Duke to bring in, by an arrangement in which I am suddenly disappointed; and I should of course, both on Lord Percy's account and his father's, be particularly sorry not to keep my word with him.

If you would prefer Lord Percy's sitting for St. Mawes, and Fremantle for Enniskillen, that would of course be just as easy; but I see no advantage in it, and it is better to keep your own force compact, and composed only of persons on whom you can entirely depend.

May I trouble you to let me have two lines by return of post, to let me know whether this arrangement is practicable, as the writs must be moved on Monday, and I must have communication with one or two people in the interval.

MR. T. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

July 21, 1806.

My dearest Brother,

The first object that presses upon my new duties, is that which arises from my finding a formal letter of resignation from Lake, of November last. It is true that at that time he was still superseded by Lord Cornwallis; but as he did not write at the time of Lord Cornwallis's death to revoke his resignation, I know not how far to hope that the having replaced him by the new commission of last February in his former situation, will have made him wish to stay. His resignation certainly is peremptory, both to the Duke of York, and to the Directors, and the object of a well-arranged military reduction in India, combining safety and economy, is so urgent, that I doubt whether all my wishes to consult Lake's personal wishes and high character, will justify the leaving this matter only subject to his option. If we act upon Lake's resignation, my inclination is to replace him by Simcoe, who, I presume, would be much gratified by the appointment, and of whom there is much reason to expect good service of renewed Indian war—*quod Deus avertat.* If we leave Lake, the next proposition would be to propose Simcoe to Madras, with the promise of succeeding to Lake at his return, which cannot in any case be very remote. You know more of Simcoe's wishes and talents than I do, and I wish to hear your opinion by the return of post. Craddock, took huff almost as soon as he got to Madras, and he has resigned. If Simcoe goes to Bengal, M'Dowall now second at Madras, will probably be the best person for that command. If Simcoe begins with Madras, there is nothing more immediately to arrange.

I find in the office some traces of a project which appears fit to pursue, if it can be made practicable. The Directors complain, and with reason, that since the King has undertaken to recruit for them, the share they get of recruits is very insufficient, and

is, of course, the worst part of every parcel; so that they are extremely impatient of the arrangement which stops their recruiting for themselves. Their artillery service, the most important to keep up, is defective; as I think, wanting 1500 out of an establishment which should be 4000. Now the present idea is to propose to government to lend three or four Sepoy battalions to the Cape garrison, and to enable one of the regular regiments there to enlist for the Company's artillery service. What recommends this to me is its offering a fair opening for beginning the system of relieving our own military service in West Indies, and in all our foreign garrisons, by Sepoy regiments; the comparative vicinity of the Cape to the East Indies seems to make that the most tempting to the Sepoys in the first instance, and, if they were properly managed there, it would be no difficult thing to extend their service farther. Tell me whether I dream in fancying that you and Simcoe have talked over some such project together.

Fox is still in a state that leaves me and his friends with no real ground of hope; and though I know of no instant alarm, I am persuaded that, at the best, he cannot continue to do any business, or long to hold his present situation. He and his friends look to Lord Holland for the Foreign Seals, which might do, but will not assist us in the House of Commons, where we want strength. My own notion is, that Grey must take the present lead in the House of Commons, with the Foreign Seals; both for the better purpose of French negotiation, which would take fright at us *bloodhounds* in the Foreign Office, and to keep together Fox's friends, who would otherwise run riot. The next best thing would be Lord Spencer in the Admiralty; but, even then, neither I nor any of us Commoners could take the Home Seals, because we cannot be three Secretaries of State at once in the House of Commons.

I think I see a notion that I might succeed Grey in the Admiralty; but I do not much like this notion, partly because it would entirely bury me, and make me perfectly useless in the

House of Commons, but chiefly because the public have been so justly satisfied with Lord Spencer in that situation, that it would seem imperfect indeed to make any change there without putting him there.

These are the difficulties; what do you say to them?

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Downing Street, July 22, 1806.

My dearest Brother,

Agreeably to what I wrote to you from Dropmore, Proby's writ, as well as King's, were moved yesterday; and I have this day acquainted the Duke of Northumberland that Lord Percy will be brought in for Enniskillen. I think it clearly better, considering the events that are impending, that you should keep your own force concentrated, and therefore that Fremantle should be returned for Buckingham rather than Lord Proby.

I trust there will be no difficulty in your so arranging St. Mawes when Young vacates, as to ensure to Proby a seat the moment he returns, if that should be before the dissolution, as, otherwise, he would have been called upon to make a sacrifice that I have no right to require from him.

Fox continues to grow worse, and they now talk of tapping. I know, however, that those of his physicians who think the worst of his case, do not expect it to terminate in less than two months, perhaps longer.

The interval is full of difficulty and distress, and the event itself, when it happens, will be highly calamitous; but such are the conditions of life, private as well as ublic.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Downing Street, July 26, 1806.

My dearest Brother,

I believe Proby is quite sure for Huntingdonshire on a disso-

lution; but if that should fail, I am sure you would be as anxious as myself that he should not be out of parliament, supposing him in England.

I fear there would be no hope of prevailing upon Wyndham to take a peerage; and, indeed, although his speeches are sometimes indiscreet, yet I believe we should, on the whole, feel the want of him in the House of Commons.

We received yesterday, the bad news of a separate peace signed at Paris between Russia and France, on the most disgraceful terms to the former that can be conceived. There is still some doubt whether this step (directly contrary as it is to D'Oubril's ostensible orders) will be ratified at Petersburg,* but I have been too long used to the total debasement of all the continental courts, to rely much on any such hope.

You may suppose that this event will not facilitate our own negotiation there.

On the 11th of July, during a debate on the Training Bill, in the House of Lords, Lord Grenville uttered these memorable words:—"*Whenever peace shall come, we must keep up such an armed force as this bill provides, by which we shall lay down a permanent system, and be at all times an armed nation—the only means by which we can preserve ourselves from surprise, and continue great and prosperous.*" Had this sound advice been followed during the long peace which commenced nine years after this date, we should have escaped the disasters which have recently so deeply affected our reputation as a military nation.

* It was not ratified.

MR. T. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

July 28, 1806.

My dearest Brother,

I write a hurried line to thank you for your letter of yesterday. Hearing nothing about Simcoe, I wrote to him on Saturday to Exeter, and therefore hope to have his answer by Wednesday or Thursday. If it be, as I wish it, in the affirmative, you must keep him a little in order as to his demands for staff, &c., which are, as you know, generally suspected of being a little beyond the ordinary course; and about the Indian establishment, I know the Duke of York is more difficult and less complying than could be easily believed, of which there is proof enough when I tell you that in spite of Lake's fame and merits in India, he sent out an officer to the quarter-master's department in lieu of young Lake, who had so much distinguished himself at Delhi; this does not signify as Lord Lake is coming home, but I mention it to show you that if Simcoe is too *exigeant* upon these points, we shall never be able to get him out. I find great difficulties as to the experiment of the Sepoys, because there is at the War Office an idea (not wholly without foundation) that there is a want of bodily strength and of habit of carrying baggage, that would make Sepoys unable to act with European regiments, besides that the Indian pay is so much better than the King's, that they could not go upon the same pay with the King's service, and more could not be given to them. I find the War Office much more disposed to hear of black Caffre corps, for raising of which a project has been sent to me that may deserve encouragement, but it is no easy matter to combat all the prejudices of the Horse Guards.

Who is Major-General St. Leger, who is recommended to me for the Bombay command? I think it lies between him and Leveson Gower, of whom I hear a good account as an officer.

Lord Moira and all our military authorities speak so highly of M'Dowall, that I believe he will be fixed upon for Madras.

Jerome is got into Martinique, with six sail, one by one, that might have been picked up if Cochrane had not, perhaps, too cautiously kept himself to the defence of Barbadoes. Sir E. Berry thinks that Warren, who was positively ordered to sail for Barbadoes without deviation, will have arrived two days after Sir E. Berry had left it. The accounts of the sickness and disabled state of Jerome's squadron, is such as makes one quite anxious that Warren may come up before Jerome slips and runs back. He had 900 sick at St. Salvador.

The 'Guerrière' is a prodigious fine frigate; it is a singular thing that it appears that the 'Guerrière' had destroyed and burnt all the ships she had taken, but had fallen in with a ship on the 17th inst., bound to Newry, and from thence, and the French on examining her papers, permitted her to go on. This is between ourselves; of course notice is sent to Newry by Lord Spencer, to trace the grounds of this partial favour. The French will be more difficult in their terms now that they have extorted from D'Oubril a peace which he was probably unauthorised to sign, but which nevertheless the new ministers at Petersburg may not have the courage to disown.

We send Lauderdale to Paris that we may have a minister the more, though we have an ally the less. I believe he will do well what he has to do.

Fox's situation is not worse, but it is not better, and I fear the operation of tapping must be had recourse to. On the subject of the seals, you seem to have forgot that the three seals cannot by law be in the House of Commons. The whole thing is full of difficulty, and it is not the smallest among them that I feel daily convinced my slender frame will not bear the work that my friends cut out for it; what it can do it shall, but I fear that will be far short of what is wished.

You will naturally see that what I write is to you only.

MR. T. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

July 30, 1806.

My dearest Brother,

The post has just brought me a letter from Simcoe, to say that as he learns from me that the Duke of York had approved of his going to India, and that Lord Minto was very desirous of having him there, he will accept of the command. I am glad of it, because, although the papers exaggerate the apprehensions of renewed war in India, and although Sir G. Barlow's letters by the 'Thalia' speak with the greatest confidence of the continuance of peace, still I should not have felt satisfied with a mere pen and ink soldier in India.

Simcoe desires me to tell you of his acceptance, and I hope you will keep your friend from urging his military pretensions upon staff, &c., so as to obstruct this very desirable appointment.

News from Paris just arrived, speak of official accounts having reached Paris of the surrender of Gaeta, and of the repulse of the Russians and Montenegrins near Ragusa. There is farther, a report at Paris, that on the 2nd, a large body of English troops landed at St. Euphemia, in Calabria, attacked a French corps and took one general officer, named Compère, and some hundreds prisoners, but that advancing to Corenza, they were attacked by Regnier and the whole French army, were driven back with great loss, and that the French hoped to prevent their re-embarkation. This latter report is unofficial, but sounds rather too probable. I hope Lauderdale will soon join Yarmouth.

The continued indisposition of Mr. Fox still kept the attention of his coadjutor directed to the question of his successor. The changes which would be effected by filling up such a vacancy would be important, and not easily to be satisfactorily accomplished. It is clear that Lord Grenville placed the greatest confidence in the talents of his

younger brother, of which he was desirous of giving a decided proof. That he was well worthy of it, there would be no difficulty in establishing. Indeed, his qualifications for official duty would have enabled him to fill the highest posts with credit.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Dropmore, Aug. 6, 1806.

My dearest Brother,

Simcoe has, as I imagine my brother has told you, accepted the command in India. It is not impossible that he may, in the meantime, be sent on a short duty elsewhere; and I have proposed Nugent to the Duke* for the command of the western district, thinking it likely to be agreeable to him.

I must say, the Duke expressed himself handsomely on the occasion, and if Nugent likes it, the thing may take place immediately.

Ever most affectionately yours,

G.

Telegraph tells us that the 'Mars' has brought in one of the four frigates. It is supposed they are those from the West Indies. The rest are got clear, if Harvey does not catch them. They were evidently trying to get in somewhere.

MR. T. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Charles Street, Aug. 8, 1806.

My dearest Brother,

For the last two days, the carrot seed which had been given to Fox as a powerful diuretic, had ceased to act, and therefore they were yesterday obliged to try the operation of tapping. It

* Duke of York.

succeeded as well as it was possible that it should, and all the circumstances have been as favourable as they could be wished to be. Eighteen quarts of water were discharged, and the colour and quality of it was thought favourable. There was no faintness, and therefore that apprehension, which had been very great, was soon removed, and he has shown more strength than they expected. They likewise believe the liver to be less increased, and less diseased than they had originally thought it; and, upon the whole, both Vaughan and Pitcairn think the present state as favourable as such a disorder could admit. The danger of mortification cannot be said to be over for two or three days, but as yet there is no unpleasant symptom of that sort, nor any peculiar reason to fear it beyond what belongs to his size and habit of body. His worst symptom now is still a total want of appetite.

I may tell you, in confidence, that he sent a message by Lauderdale to Lord Grenville, to propose that Lord Holland might hold the Foreign Seals for him; and Lord Grenville has thought it prudent, for the present, to put by the discussion. Lord Grenville's preference is still for Grey in that situation, and for me to succeed Grey at the Admiralty till I could take the Home Seals, by Lord Grey's death calling his son up to the House of Peers. I feel much disposed to doubt whether I can be of any good service by entering into this sea of troubles, which will engross all my time, and annihilate me for the House of Commons; besides which, I think there is an evident impropriety in my taking the Admiralty while there is Lord Spencer to hold it; and it does not seem decorous that so essential a branch of government should undergo such frequent changes, which cannot take place without inconvenience to that very important department. I cannot see any good way out of these difficulties.

We know nothing of the French report of our loss of 1800 men in Calabria, but I trust the loss is exaggerated, though I

fear Sir Sidney has burnt his fingers. We shall hardly hear from Lauderdale before Sunday.

I have, at length, decided for Major-General Smith at Bombay. He has served with great reputation with Lake, has much distinguished himself, and is very highly thought of.

I am to see Simcoe to-day.

VISCOUNT MORPETH TO MR. T. GRENVILLE.

Aldwich, Aug. 21, 1806.

DEAR GRENVILLE,

I was very glad to receive a letter from you yesterday, and as I did not expect to hear of any very important events, I was quite satisfied with the information that it contained—indeed, I feel much obliged to you for putting me in possession of what is going on at the Board. I like very much the idea of employing Sepoy battalions out of India, and trust the service is capable of extension. I suppose it is attended with considerable difficulty with regard to provisions, at least to the dressing of them, &c. Might not they be persuaded to accompany the Chinese to Trinidad, and, by that means, save us the danger of black regiments in the West Indies. The recruiting, I believe, in the East Indies is very easy; and upon our reducing our establishment, they usually go into the service of some of the Mahratta powers. Much benefit would result from that being obviated.

With regard to the estimates, Mr. Witham appears to draw almost a more favourable view than I expected, for he seemed very incredulous with respect to the Madras accounts.*

I see Sir Arthur Wellesley has published his speech. I am much behind him, but I have sent it to Witham to put it in order. As the accounts are before the House, there cannot, I

* On the 13th of July, Lord Morpeth, in bringing forward the India Budget, had made a statement of the finances of the Indian government, which was far from satisfactory.

conceive, be any objection to publishing a statement that certainly is of a melancholy cast, but the remedy to that will be, that few persons will read it.

The view of the establishment compared with former periods which you propose to take, appears highly proper, but I suppose will be rather laborious in the execution.

I have read since I have been here, Mr. Farquhar's papers; they certainly contain a strong body of evidence in his favour.

I cannot properly judge of his grievances, but he seems active and well qualified for the department from which he was removed.

The accounts of Fox really appear essentially good, but I am not sanguine enough to suppose that he will be soon capable of much exertion. Your account of some other persons is rather singular—it is to be hoped that they will at last acquire some knowledge of their own minds.

I shall be very glad if you can give me some more information respecting Parliament, as my plans for October will, in a great measure, depend upon it.

Believe me, most truly yours.

M.

The important victory of Maida, our first great battle with a French army in Europe during the recent war, afforded a pleasant excitement to Ministers, troubled as they were with increasing complications. Our naval armaments were also in full activity, and occasional small successes gave promise of larger. The negotiations at Paris were drawing to a close, but were never farther from a treaty.

MR. T. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Aug. 23, 1806.

My dearest Brother,

Warren has been heard of; he arrived at Barbadoes on the 12th, and went in pursuit of the French; the last heard of him was at St. Bartholomew's, on the 14th, and St. Thomas's, on the 15th.

The French had tried for our convoy at St. Kitt's, which cut and run, and has come home safe; they then made for our convoy at Tortola, whither they were followed by Cochrane, who came in sight of them time enough to prevent their attacking that convoy; he was making an effort to attack their two windward ships, when he saw them joined by the regulars and two frigates, and thinking them too strong for him, he was satisfied with having saved the Tortola convoy, and he returned to St. Kitt's very properly.

It appears that the French fleet left Porto Rico on the 7th, steering north-west, which looks like making for the Havannah. There is, however, another account, but rather indistinct, which says that they sailed from Cape Samana, to the south-west on the 9th, in order to go by the Mona passage to St. Domingo. If this last account be true, Warren will catch them, for his orders were to make the Mona passage, where the 'Ferret' had been detached to give him intelligence; and if he left St. Thomas's on the 15th, while on the 9th the French sailed for St. Domingo, they cannot escape. My fears, however, are that they have pursued their course originally to the Havannah, and have not changed it for St. Domingo, for I do not see what they were doing at Cape Samana, if their object was St. Domingo. Cochrane had heard nothing of Warren.

We have nothing material by our yesterday's messenger. We just learn by telegraph that Lord Yarmouth is landed; he has

leave to come home, and the negotiation remains in Lauderdale's hands.

Fox was ill yesterday, having deranged his stomach by eating figs; he is in some respects much better, but the water is beginning to return in his body, though not in his legs.

I am going with Lord Grenville to Dropmore, where we stay till Tuesday morning.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Downing Street, Sept. 2, 1806.

My dearest Brother,

Accounts are this instant received that Russia has *refused* to ratify D'Oubril's treaty. A note has been *circulated* to the foreign ministers at Petersburg, to inform them of this determination.

The dispatches from Stewart are come. The victory in Calabria has been most brilliant and decisive. 4700 men (English) against 7000 French. A battle fought in the open plain, and the respective steadiness of the troops fairly tried.

This success led to a complete insurrection in Calabria, in which the French suffered great loss. But since that Massena has marched. Stewart with his little army is re-embarked, and I fear the result can only be the making of that country a second Vendée.

The South American expeditions, which will presently begin to figure in the correspondence, originated with Mr. Pitt, who had planned one to co-operate with General Miranda, in December, 1804, under the command of Sir Home Popham; but when he arrived at the Cape, the undertaking had been abandoned. Without any authority from his government, Sir Home persuaded the governor of that colony, Sir David Baird, to join him in an attack

upon Buenos Ayres on the 24th of June of this year, which was perfectly successful. The accounts of this exploit sent home made it imperative on the government to endeavour to secure such an acquisition to the British crown; but on the 4th of August, Sir Home Popham allowed himself to be surprised by a superior force, and his troops were obliged to surrender. The reinforcements sent from England subsequently enabled him to renew hostilities, but they were unskilfully carried on, and met with a result equally disastrous.

The difficulties of the Minister being on the increase, the Marquis of Buckingham volunteered to accept a minor appointment, with a view of lessening his brother's political embarrassments, and suggested a means of remedying the most pressing. The first idea could not be entertained, but the other was taken into consideration and acted upon. The coming event that had so long cast a shadow upon the deliberations of the Ministry, occurred at last, and found them still unprepared.

MR. T. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Charles Street, Sept. 5, 1806.

My dearest Brother,

The probability that parliament will necessarily meet towards the latter end of October seems to make it indispensable to form some plan of arrangement without much delay; and Lord Grenville wishes Lord Spencer and me to settle something definitively with him by Tuesday next, on which he can act without farther delay. I am myself very much at a loss to know what it is best to look to; and my doubts are not a little increased by the entire distrust which I have of my health and strength being equal to the fatigues

of active lead in a parliamentary campaign. That campaign, too, will be an active one; for I do not expect that we shall now be joined by the two or three individuals whom I had thought we might have detached from the Opposition benches, and have placed with us. The inclination of Lord Grenville's mind rather points towards Grey succeeding Fox, and my taking the Admiralty, at least for the present; but my objections to this are so strong, that I think he now no longer entertains that idea; in truth I cannot look at any chance of being able to be of any use in parliament, if I take an office that must so entirely engross my attention as the Admiralty, neither do I think that the public mind would be gratified, or the public service promoted by my succeeding Grey at the Admiralty; if there is a change there, Lord Spencer is naturally the successor to that office, and what is quite decisive against my thinking of it, is that I am satisfied Lord Spencer wishes to take it, and therefore no consideration could induce me to stand in his way, even if I thought it otherwise desirable, which I do not in any point of view.

Excluding this project, therefore, Lord Grenville has suggested the offer of the Foreign Seals to Grey, calling him up to the House of Lords, Lord Spencer, Admiralty, and the Home Seals for me, or giving the Home Seals to Lord Henry Petty, and the Exchequer to me. The first difficulty will be to learn whether Grey will go up to the Lords with the Foreign Seals, and whether if he does, Fox's friends in the House of Commons will be satisfied; but then we can give Whitbread the Board of Control, or Secretary at War, by giving Fitzpatrick the Mint, till he can have a good government, and this may reconcile Grey and Fox's friends to seeing Grey now go to the Lords instead of waiting for his father's death; by this arrangement we could likewise find room for Tierney or Bathurst, or perhaps for both, when Fitzpatrick can have a good government. There would then remain only to decide between Lord H. Petty and me, as to Exchequer and Home Seals. I have no very strong opinion of preference, but I

am inclined to think that upon the whole, Lord Henry had better stay where he is, both because he is by that station kept in more immediate connexion with a superior at the Treasury, and because his great youth and inexperience would not seem calculated to make such a promotion popular; there are besides this some reasons in relation both to Ireland and Scotland, which appear to me to make it less desirable to place the Home Seals in Lord Henry's hands. Every different shape, however, of the arrangements which I have described as being in question, seem to have more or less difficulty and embarrassment, and I am naturally very desirous of the benefit of your judgment and opinion to help the insufficiency of mine.

By our last Paris accounts, I take for granted they have been waiting for the result of D'Oubril's treaty; and late yesterday, we heard from Copenhagen that, on the 16th, the Emperor Alexander had formally notified that D'Oubril had signed a treaty which he had no authority to make, and which the Emperor must formally disavow. If this be true, as I believe it, the negotiation will immediately come to the point of war or peace. You see by the extraordinary Gazette, that we have been fighting gallantly in Calabria; but I hope we have carried our laurels back to Sicily; for certainly we are not to look to marching northward to the conquest of Italy with 4790 English.

We have not heard from Lord St. Vincent. The Paris reports of Jerome's arrival still seem uncertain.

MR. T. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

India Board, Sept. 10, 1806.

My dearest Brother,

I have heard no very particular account of poor Fox this morning, but his state is considered as absolutely desperate as to the event, and whether it be one day or another, it seems now considered as inevitable.

Your letter, therefore, found William, and Lord Spencer, and me, under the necessity of determining something upon the important topics of it; but with so strong a sense of the inconveniences of every possible arrangement, that we have been unable, as yet, to come to any determination; and in that respect, your view seems to be very much the same as ours; for your letter, like our deliberations, is richer in the sense of difficulties, than in resources to remove them. In truth, I suspect that they will be found irremoveable, and that the choice left to us is from the nature of things, subject, on all sides, to great and important objections.

William's present inclination turns towards the idea of proposing to Lord Howick to take the lead in the House of Commons with the Admiralty, while he remains there, and to change with Lord Spencer on his father's death; and that Lord H. Petty should have, at present, the Home Seals, Lord Spencer the Foreign, and that I should be Chancellor of the Exchequer.

The inconveniencies of this are very great—first, because I doubt whether Lord Howick will not think the Admiralty, as in truth it is, an absolute disability for the business of the lead; but, secondly, even if neither he nor Lord H. Petty object to this arrangement, I still think there is much to say against raising Lord Henry higher than he is now, and giving him, with the Home Seals, the control of Ireland and Scotland; and he, holding the Seals, must naturally take the lead above the Chancellor of Exchequer, whenever Lord Howick's father dies; and, added to all this, there is an unwillingness on my part to take, or to believe that I can manage the laborious details of that office, which could only be useful to William, if it took the lead in the House of Commons, from which, in this case, it would be debarred, both in present and in future. But again, I say, I am persuaded Lord Howick will not keep Admiralty with lead, and if he did,

I should advise leaving Lord Henry where he is, and placing the Home Seals with me.

If Lord Howick takes the Foreign Seals, as I am persuaded he will, then William thinks he must go up to the House of Lords, because then Lord Spencer must take the Admiralty; and unless Lord Howick went up to the Lords, there must be a new person taken in the House of Lords for the Home Seals; and that cannot be unless it was Lord Holland, to which there are many objections.

William still has a hankering after putting me into the Admiralty for the present, but both my public feelings, as described before to you, and my private regards to Lord Spencer, to whom this would be very unpleasant, makes me continue to be most eagerly averse from this proposal. Wyndham has had some conversation with Lord Grenville, by which it appears that he himself disclaims all idea of leading, and is anxious for Grey to do so. It has occurred that it may be worth while to sound him about the House of Lords, but it cannot be forced upon him, and I do not think he will hear of it.

We have exhausted our budget of resources, does any new one occur to you? You see by Lauderdale's remaining at Paris, that the negotiation is not broken off by their having received a formal disavowal from Petersburg of D'Oubril's treaty, and as in the first instance the French Emperor has not raged or stormed, but has continued to discuss, I do not think any such intemperance as you fear will break in upon the discussions, though I know not what will be the result of them. Prussia is armed, but I have no confidence there; Austria perhaps will be forced by France to declare against Russia for the supposed protection of the Porte, and if war goes on, it may probably furnish materials to act upon on both shores of the Adriatic; but all this is still too uncertain to see clearly into it. The conduct and professions from Petersburg are as cordial and friendly as could be wished, but the uncertainty in which they will be kept at Petersburg by

the doubtful conduct both of Prussia and Austria, will hang heavily upon their military operations.

MR. WYNDHAM TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Arlington Street, Sept. 12, 1806.

My dear Lord,

I have only this instant got your letter (half-past 5,) and as there is no time for explanation, have desired, that it may be sent off directly to the Dean of Wells, with an earnest desire that he will immediately do what he can in furtherance of your views. With best respects to Lady Buckingham and yourself from Mrs. Wyndham, in which I beg to join. Believe me, my dear Lord, with great truth,

Yours most kindly,
H. Wyndham.

P.S. When will it be convenient to Sir William Young that I should give in his name to the King for Tobago? I was going to do so long since, but was stopt by Lord Grenville, and have to blame myself for not having since inquired. I was going to write, but, having this opportunity, you will perhaps excuse my making use of it.

A telegraph account just stating what is called the capture of Buenos Ayres, on the 28th inst. I wish I had anything good to tell you of Mr. Fox. What a reverse since we met last year at Stowe.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Downing Street, Sept. 14, 1806.

My dearest Brother,

Fox is still alive, and by the course his disorder has now taken, the water beginning to collect again, it seems likely some days may still elapse before a final close; but no hope of recovery

can be entertained, nor do his friends any longer indulge themselves in any such expectations.

Did I mention to you that when Westminster is vacated, Lord Percy is to stand? I trust there will be no doubt of his success, especially if he has no other opponent than Cobbett.

Nothing is yet settled about new arrangements, but I have taken some steps to ascertain whether the peer you wish to make can be made, without thrusting honour upon him in such a way not very consistent with friendship or connection.

MR. T. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

India Board, Sept. 13, 1806.

MY DEAREST BROTHER,

I was much obliged to you for the attention which your letter showed you to have given to the consideration of all our many difficulties. I am so used to find you always sacrificing your own convenience to the hope of assisting your friends, that I am not in that respect surprised at the suggestion which you throw out respecting your undergoing the labour of part of the civil administration of the Navy. But, although you are ready enough to make any sacrifice of yourself, I must fairly say there are some which I cannot bear to see you make; and the situation of which you speak is one so little becoming your rank, character, and station, that I could never bring myself to undergo the mortification of seeing you in it. In this opinion, William entirely concurs; but at the same time, he thinks the suggestion, as far as it relates to Grey, is much too valuable to be neglected; and he therefore means to talk with him about carrying it into effect.

The very desperate state in which poor Fox now remains, with very little probability of surviving many hours, with an additional and new pressure of business from the arrival of the dispatches with the capture of Buenos Ayres, makes it impossible for William

or me to emigrate to Dropmore to-morrow; but towards the end of the week there seems a good chance for it; and though I cannot in conscience propose to you the fatigue and melancholy of a journey to Pall Mall, I do most confidently hope and trust that you will, without fail, come to us at Dropmore the first moment that William can find to go there.

Nothing has yet been discussed with Lord Howick, &c., chiefly because poor Fox's situation has daily of late seemed to call for this delay, and partly because it was desirable to endeavour to ascertain what sort of assistance there was any chance of obtaining among the old ranks, without breaking through our new ranks, which I trust is, as it ought to be, completely out of the question; for a moment I had taught myself to think that some accession of that sort was practicable, and if so, it did certainly appear most desirable, because there is no disguising the truth, that the present shape of things in the House of Commons does not furnish such strength as the government there ought to possess under all the difficulties of the present moment; my hopes and expectations, however, from that quarter are pretty much over, because I fear there is no great chance of doing anything there, except on the footing of treating with the whole, and no view can be entertained of that without demanding for it more sacrifices than are fit to take into a moment's consideration.

I think William's inclination is at present to agree in your opinion respecting the idea of my taking the Foreign Seals, in case Lord Howick will consent to take the lead with the Admiralty; my fears are that if Lord Howick consents, it still will leave us too weak in the House of Commons, but I am likewise strongly of opinion that Lord Howick will be very desirous of the Foreign Seals, and very reluctant to unite the lead in the House with the labours of the Admiralty. We shall, however, soon be under the necessity of communicating with Lord Howick, and till we do so, I know not how we can

form any new judgment on the matter. Wyndham has been sounded about a peerage, which he declines, but with perfect good humour and complacency, and without any soreness as to the offer having being made.

William will have sent you the account of the scrambling success at Buenos Ayres, which appears, as far as relates to the execution of it, to have been managed with much ability both by Popham and Beresford; the latter will I hope at all events continue there, and I should myself be perhaps forgiving enough to extend an amnesty to Popham who, though very blameable in the project, has certainly had great merit in the execution; but I know not whether my colleagues will be as mercifully disposed as I am. The whole captured treasure including bark and quicksilver, is about four millions of dollars, but what I like still more, is the liberality with which everything claimed as private property is restored to the claimants; and you will see in the Gazette account how much this conduct has told already to conciliate the country.

Ever my dear brother,

Most affectionately,

THOMAS GRENVILLE.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Sept. 13, 1806.

I am quite persuaded, my dearest brother, that the arrangement you suggest is the best, and it is that I shall try to carry into effect, if I can get Lord Howick to agree to it. Your peer decidedly declines his honours. I dare not hope to get out to-morrow. At the end of next week, perhaps, we could all meet.

An idea of treating with the Opposition, except in a body, seems quite out of the question, and for that there are obviously no possible means. Beresford's letters speak pretty confidently of

maintaining themselves at Buenos Ayres till we can send reinforcements.

MR. T. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Wednesday Eve.

A telegraph message announces the arrival of a messenger at Deal, with the account that Lord Lauderdale was to leave Paris to-morrow, and the 'Clyde' was gone to carry him over.

Thornborough takes Hood's command; he goes in the 'Prince of Wales,' with the 'Spencer,' and the 'Captain,' 'Theseus,' and 'Ganges,' are hourly expected in to go with him; if anything delays these three, he will take the 'Montagu' and 'Achilles' for the present.

Admiral Louis was left on the 4th in chase of two or three French frigates, probably the 'Revanche' and 'Seine;' I hope he will not drive them into the track of the poor shattered Jamaica men. American news tell us we have taken the Spanish 'Pomona,' off the Moro, by the 'Anson' and 'Arethusa.' The 'Patriote' 74, 'Valeureuse' 38, and 'Sybille' 44, are at Anapolis, in the Delaware, and at Norfolk, having very much suffered by the hurricane; if the other four try to get into the Chesapeake, Cochrane with his three untouched will have a chance of them. A letter from Lord Collingwood announces that he will send home the 'Neptune' as soon as ever anything else joins him. The 'Atlas' sails next week.

I have a sloop or two to give, but Granville would get nothing by them, as Lord Howick has appointed him to one in the Mediterranean. The little I hear still makes me suspect Prussian peace rather than Prussian war, and if Lauderdale has left Paris, Bonaparte will, I suppose, confirm Hanover to Prussia.

MR. T. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Charles Street, Sunday Morning, 8 a.m.

MY DEAREST BROTHER,

A few hours after I had written to you yesterday, poor Fox breathed his last. He died a little after six.

In the difficulty and uncertainty of the arrangements to be made, I feel so doubtful whether we can get to Dropmore, and both of us naturally so desirous of conversing with you upon these important topics, that I cannot help expressing a wish to see you here, if you could come up without any real inconvenience, and if you are quite stout and free from malady. The messenger who takes this will supply the want of the post of to-day, and if you set out quietly to-morrow morning, we shall see you at dinner here.

Nothing yet has passed as you will naturally suppose, but Lord Grenville will see Lord Howick this morning, to learn his general notions.

If the Gazette is out, I have desired it may accompany this.

Yours affectionately.

T. G.

Mr. Fox ceased to appear in parliament from about the middle of July, yet continued to give his attention to the duties of his office as Secretary for Foreign Affairs, for some time longer. The fiat, however, had gone forth, and the most popular statesman of his age, breathed his last on the 17th of the following September. Had he survived, it is probable that he would have proved worthy of the public favour he had long enjoyed; but

the realization of good or great intentions, is never entirely under the control of any mortal, however favourable his position for it, or decided his inclinations. He left a name which, for many years after his death, was regarded by his numerous enthusiastic admirers, as one of the most brilliant among the illustrious of this period; a name which, after the lapse of half a century, still retains so much of its political power, as to attract and retain a large share of that devotion, which it originally created. In Charles James Fox, there existed the elements of a truly great mind. It may be a matter of regret that he did not make more of his opportunities, but at least he secured for his memory the fame of having fallen at his post, boldly combating the formidable enemy of his country.

When the English plenipotentiary began to exhibit impatience at the obstinacy of the French government and had demanded his passports, the Emperor of Russia made public his refusal to ratify the treaty into which his agent had been cajoled. At once more favourable conditions were proposed to Lord Lauderdale, in which figured the restoration of Hanover, and the possession of Malta, the Cape, Tobago, and Pondicherry; but these falling short of his instructions, the ambassador finally was permitted to commence his return, nine days after Napoleon had left Paris to lead his grand army against the hastily levied forces of Prussia—this ill-regulated government having for years maintained a treacherous and selfish policy, from fear of the French Emperor, had suddenly been roused by

the contemptuous treatment it received in return, and had organized a national movement for a war with France, directed by inexperienced princes of the Royal Family of Prussia, who were intent on a life and death struggle with the most skilful commander the age had produced, in possession of overwhelming military resources.*

Napoleon has stated, that the death of Mr. Fox, alone prevented the accomplishment of a durable peace between the two nations; but that Minister's last despatches to Lord Lauderdale afford conclusive evidence against such an assertion.

On the 27th of August, Lord Holland was sworn of the Privy Council; on the 24th of September, Lord Howick was gazetted as the successor of Mr. Fox, and sworn of the Privy Council; three days afterwards, Mr. Thomas Grenville succeeded to Lord Howick's place at the Board of Admiralty; and on the 30th, Mr. Tierney succeeded Mr. Thomas Grenville at the India Board; on October 8, Lord Sidmouth was declared Lord President of the Council in place of Earl Camden, resigned; on October 15, Lord Holland was sworn Keeper of the Privy Seal; on the 25th, Thomas Francis Fremantle and William Framkland were gazetted Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, in place of Sir Philip Stephens and Sir Charles Pole; and among other creations on the 15th of November, Lieutenant-general George Nugent of Waddesden, Buckinghamshire, was created a Baronet.

* The French army, led by Napoleon in person, numbered 186,000 of the finest troops in the world, commanded by Bernadotte, Marmont, Davoust, Soult, Lefebre, Ney, Augereau, Murat, and Lannes.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Downing Street, Sept. 24, 1806.

My dearest Brother,

The King received me yesterday in his most gracious manner; kept me two hours, expressed himself satisfied with the arrangements, and seemed to intend that his manner on this occasion should contradict certain reports, &c.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Downing Street, Sept. 27, 1806.

My dearest Brother,

Everything seems to me to go on swimmingly. Tom has still hopes of Young, but I believe he will be disappointed. I had with Tierney a very satisfactory explanation, as far as it went, but much must, of course, depend on the manner in which it is executed.

No news yet of Bonaparte's having marched, but I think it seems likely that he will attack Russia, and I must own I have very little confidence in the result, knowing, as I do, the wretched creatures who still direct at Berlin.

Partly, in consequence of Mr. Thomas Grenville's position at the Admiralty, and partly, from the urgent necessity of energetic measures, the correspondence of the Grenvilles henceforth bears a very warlike aspect. The liberality of the Marquis of Buckingham to his younger brother comes by way of pleasing contrast to this intense hostility; everything else, however, breathes of war by sea and land. Ministerial plans for new expeditions, are followed by accounts of

changes at the Board of Admiralty, notices of naval successes, and reports of the admiral of an important station. The projected attack on Mexico shows, at least, that active hostilities were extended by the government wherever an assailable point presented itself. Under the date October 31st, a letter from the same hand indicates this enterprising spirit still more prominently.

MR. T. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Oct. 1, 1806.

My dearest Brother,

Since I told you yesterday of Young's declining, I have seen Domett, and have found him ready to undertake it, though with some professions of modest incompetency. I shall see him again to-morrow; but as the present board agree to go on with me for the present, I shall talk of no change till I have settled the whole; and, therefore, will beg of you not to talk of Domett as being fixed yet. My present inclination is to see whether I shall not immediately pursue Lord Howick's project, of sending out Pole to join Lord St. Vincent; but that cannot be without a sufficient successor to Pole at the Board.

I have asked more about Tucker since I saw you; but although I have no fears for myself of his intrigues, I do find so universal a dislike to him, that I am afraid his remaining ultimately must be out of the question. The person I should like best would be Harrison, the naval commissioner, and Lord Spencer's private secretary to be the second; and Nichols to be first, if I find him practicable as such with Domett; I am now sounding Harrison about this, but I do not imagine that he will quit the Board and his other expectations, for second secretary, though if he would, what I know of him makes me think he would be, as such, invaluable to me. Among other objections to Tucker, I do not think he would do with Domett, from what

passed in conversation to-day, and that conversation as far as it went, increases very much my disposition to believe that Domett will be a great point gained. Sir Henry Neal is a great friend of Domett's, which is also good. I will make the inquiries you desire about Mr. Jeans, and if they answer, I will do what you desire about him.

Your magnificences overpower me, my dearest brother, for when the box is opened (which I know not how to do) I fear I shall find your plate cannot be used with that which I have ordered, and I shall be very reluctant indeed either to new found it, or to lock it up without using it. Shall I not be very ungrateful in urging these difficulties? and yet, in truth, I know not how to get over them.

Morpeth goes to-day. I hear no news. My commission is not yet sealed, so I have not been at the Board.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Downing Street, Oct. 3, 1806.

My dearest Brother,

I imagine you will hear direct from the Admiralty the prosperous news of the day. It is a famous beginning, and I trust he [Mr. Thomas Grenville] will continue as happily. He is much annoyed about the choice of his sea lords, and for my own part, I heartily wish he had fixed on any rather than worry himself so much about the choice.

The news from Germany is that the King of Prussia has actually left Berlin to join his army—that the French minister at Dresden has actually quitted that Court, and La Foret at Berlin, has in like manner demanded his passports; so that war appeared inevitable. Still, however, the King clings to Haugwitz and Lombard, and while he does so, I have little hope of real good.

I am revolving in my mind a project in which I want your

assistance. It is to attack Mexico on both sides, from hence with about 6000 Europeans, who would replace in the islands a like number of seasoned troops, and take with them 2000, or even 3000 black troops, in addition to the 6000 seasoned whites, so as to have as little as possible to fear from climate, which has always hitherto been the Spaniards' best defence on that side. Then for India, my project is to send one King's regiment, completed by volunteers then to its full complement of 1000 men, and about 4000 Sepoys. To let them first attack Manilla, and then proceed from there in the beaten track to Acapulco. The objection obviously is, that these two attacks cannot correspond exactly in point of time. They certainly cannot, though I have not yet been able to ascertain the precise periods at which the different operations may be expected to take place. But if the attack from Europe succeeds, I need not say how important a reinforcement of 4000 or 5000 seasoned troops would be a few months after their arrival; and I think it better to risk the first expedition alone, than to delay it to a more unhealthy season, in the hope of a distant and contingent co-operation, which, after all, may be prevented by any appearance of native war in India. To all this, I am afraid we must add the choice of another Commander-in-chief in India to execute these details, for, from the account of Simcoe, I have little hope of him.

You will be sorry for poor Hood's losing his arm. Lord Spencer suggested to me to-day whether, under that circumstance, he might not be less disposed to active service, and, consequently, to be looked to for the Admiralty. What do you think of him for it?

I have little doubt that the frigates and troops were going to Monte Video; and yet I do not understand how this was to be done in the teeth of our naval force in the Plata.

Pray turn in your mind all the details of my project, particularly as to times and seasons, and let me know your ideas upon it.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

My dearest Brother,

Many thanks for your letter. I shall wait with impatience for your further ideas. I wish you could get Stevenson's plans from him without the necessity of my seeing him in the first instance, which is a great draft upon my time.

As far as I can yet collect, the period from March to September is the most unhealthy for active operations in Mexico; and therefore, if an East Indian force gets there by September next, it is as soon as we ought to wish. The desire of filling up the interval usefully, is what put me upon the Manilla idea, especially as there must be some intermediate place for water and refreshment.

Ever most affectionately yours.

G.

MR. T. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Oct. 3, 1806.

My dearest Brother,

I have waked this morning to the capture of the 'President' of 44 guns, by Sir Thomas Louis, on 27th September, lat. 47°., long. 5°. She had been separated on 20th August, from the 'Regulus,' 'Sybille,' and 'Surveillante,' who are likewise expected to push for L'Orient, and there is a chance of them. At 1 p.m. arrived here Lieutenant Henderson from Sir Samuel Hood, with an account of Sir Samuel having taken four French frigates, one of 46, and three of 44, crammed full of troops, out of Rochefort. They kept up a running fight, in which unfortunately, Sir Samuel lost his right arm; but he is doing very well, and writes cheerfully, and signs his despatches himself. There were five frigates, and two sloops of 18, bound, as the prisoners say, to the West Indies; but they were victualled for seven months, and evidently were, in

our opinion, destined for Monte Video. There were one thousand nine hundred troops on board. One 44, and the other two sloops escaped into St. Sebastian, and the others fought hard to get off, but without success. The loss on our part is nine killed and thirty-two, as I think, wounded; but the despatches were immediately sent off to Windsor.

Warren was seen by an American arrived at Liverpool—at least we conclude so, for the American saw on the 12th September, six line-of-battle and three sloops or frigates, in lat. 87°, long. 39°, which must be him, though it is odd that he should have been cruizing so long at such a distance in the open sea. By a neutral information we are told that a new frigate got out of Cherbourg, on the 20th.; we have sent to ascertain this.

I saw Domett again, who hesitated, and has since written to decline absolutely, so I am again afloat.

Our Prussian news is still of war, Bonaparte having absolutely refused to hear of anything from Berlin, but their disarming, while he professes that he must advance to resist the Russians.

I do not stand well the first burst of all this fatigue, with the additional anxiety for being so entirely disappointed in Young and Domett, and without much other hope of good resource.

Saturday Morning, Oct. 4, 1806.

I catch a moment to write to you before breakfast, least I should be overpowered with the business which leaves me not an instant of quiet, and breaks in upon my only fund of strength, my sleep.

By telegraph, yesterday evening, I find that the 'Centaur' has arrived, but with a green wound of so heavy a description, one cannot think of sending, or proposing to send, Hood to a hot climate, even if he would go. As, however, the service is very pressing, we now think of Thornborough to replace Hood in the South American command; his ship and he being both

ready. We had intended to have collected a little more together our channel squadrons into one of eight, and one of ten; but as Keats, to do this, must have left Rochefort, and as those frigates now taken must have been destined for Monte Video, I am afraid to lose sight of the five (if not six) sail of the line still at Rochefort, and therefore we have ordered the blockade there to be continued, till at least our expedition shall have secured its previous arrival.

I am still as I told you, quite at a loss for a sheet-anchor, and wish Markham had not made so many enemies, for in zeal and quickness of resource he seems to me to have great merit. My wish had been to have tried Fremantle with Domett, if Domett had been found sufficient, but the truth is, he is too nervous for the business. You see by this that I keep Fremantle as much in my eye as I can, but still I can look at no arrangement till my first is settled to my mind, of which I now protest I see no opening; I thought a moment of Sir S. Hood, but besides other things, his one arm, poor fellow, might be a real hindrance in writing business. I am not near so determined against Tucker as you seem to imagine, but still I cannot begin by fixing the lesser points, as the party feelings of the navy might through that, still more impede the one material arrangement of real confidence.

Keats, Nichols, Hood, seem the only present chances, and I know not that any are good to abide by. I am afraid of Harrison's health, and am very little anxious for that as Lord Spencer could always do it the moment he comes to the board, and so far from being adverse to Tucker, I shall try to keep him, but to such a forward politician as second secretary, some of those whom I want as confidential at the board may object; and therefore, as I before said, I cannot look to the livery till the steward and butler are agreed on. This puts me in mind of your plate my dear brother, which, at your kind solicitation I have sent for, though I protest I know not what I can do

unless I make it literally into plates, instead of using china plates; for my difficulty which you forget, is that I have already got silver dishes in a great state of forwardness, and therefore, shall not know how to bestow your kind present unless they are cut down into silver plates. I send you the list, found in the box, because it seems to exceed what you describe. Pray give me your orders and instructions about it, as to the exact articles which your magnificent kindness pours on me.

P.S. I have just received your kind letter, and certainly feel such real pleasure in incurring new obligations to you after the very many already incurred, that I do not hesitate to accept your magnificent present, and beg you to believe that I am always as sensible as I ought to be for your kindness. I think by your account, the clothing may turn out to be practicable, but you will see it must take some days before I can move about it. The Great Seal is at Portsmouth, which delays my commission and Morpeth's. The 'Terrible' is come in dismasted by a hurricane off Barbadoes, which makes us uneasy about the rest of Strachan's squadron. I dine with the board at Lord Howick's to-morrow.

Bonaparte went on the 25th to Mentz and Frankfort with Talleyrand and Clark, and has left Champagny to negotiate with Lauderdale. Ten regiments of infantry, and two of cavalry are at Zeist, and give out that they are to be joined by a French army of 50,000, called the Weser army. Prussia moves actively with her troops, but I think still the only contest will be between Talleyrand and Haugwitz, and not between their respective armies: but Morpeth goes to-morrow evening.

The 'Veteran' is moored and defended by such batteries as make a boat attack very desperate, but Lord Howick thinks she must go to pieces.

The Paris news is that Massena and Verdier have received a great check in Calabria, that they are both wounded, and the former with difficulty escaped. The horrors of that war are in-

credible. The Calabrians wound and mutilate their prisoners, and Massena is said, in revenge, to have burnt Lauria and destroyed 10,000 inhabitants,

Cattaro is in the hands of the Russians, who have not delivered it, and will now keep it.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Downing Street, Oct. 13, 1806.

My dearest Brother,

After some hesitation about our finance means of going on, we have resolved to dissolve parliament on the 25th of this month. The general popularity that has attended the rupture of the negotiations seems to afford an opportunity not to be lost of pledging a new parliament to the same system, and although the notice is short to our friends, and the time very limited for our own arrangements, I have no doubt that on the whole, the measures will be for the advantage of government.

If Talbot does not stand for the county Dublin, his support of the government member would be decisive. Can you do anything in it? It is also wished, I understand, that Lord Kenmare should support a Mr. Herbert in Kerry, but this I do not thoroughly know about. You once talked of Lord Delvin's standing for Westmeath, but Elliot tells me he understands there has been some meeting of the interests of the county, and that it is settled that the old members shall come in. I do not know that the interest of government would be much in such a case, but such as it is, I reserved saying anything about it till I had written to you.

MR. T. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Oct. 14, 1806.

Dearest Brother,

Lord Grenville undertook to tell you of our resolution to

dissolve the night that we took it. I now take up a hasty pen to tell you that I have at length made up my mind to keep Markham, and have told him so, and we are now established in perfect confidence. I have also apprised Sir Charles Pole of my intention to send him out second in command to the Channel fleet; and his seat becoming vacated at the board, I propose to offer it to Fremantle as soon as he comes here, which I hope may be soon expected. I do not at present think of any other change, except perhaps Sir P. Stephens to make way for Dickenson. I have given Conway Shipley the only frigate I have had; it is a small one of 22 guns, called the 'Comus,' but it is quite new, and very good in its kind.

Morpeth is following the King of Prussia, but he has not yet overtaken him.

Even amid the bustle of a general election, the warlike preparations and intelligence come forward more prominently than ever. It is obvious that the government was not idle, and that while Napoleon was demolishing Prussia, our naval forces were assailing his ships in whatever sea they made their appearance. The reference also to Sir Arthur Wellesley in Mr. Grenville's letter of November 17th, indicates an intention of attempting a military expedition to repeat the experiment at Maida. Obstacles, however, intervened—the most serious of which arose from the want of judgment in some of Mr. Grenville's superiors, and the inefficiency of several of his subordinates.

MR. T. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Oct. 15, 1806.

MY DEAREST BROTHER,

Lord Grenville having told me that the Speaker is warmly and actively supported for Oxford by the Dean of Christ Church, and having never felt any disposition to sit in parliament for the University, unless it should have been a pretty general, and unanimous desire, I have told him that I should certainly enter into no contest, and I would have authorised him to tell the Speaker that I should give him no trouble at Oxford, did I not think it due to you to wait, in order to have this previous communication with you, upon a matter in which we are both so essentially interested. I trust that you will think with me, that as my own college would, in part, at least, be against me, it would be ungracious and unpromising to pursue a contest, more especially, as besides my general incapacity for election canvassing, my present office does not leave me one hour in the twenty-four that can be so disposed of.

Sir S. Hood recovers so fast, that if we had pursued the original object of his intended command, which you told me you knew of, I should still have been encouraged to send him; but the season is too far advanced to encourage the attempt now. We therefore send Crawford round, and I shall give to that expedition the 'Agincourt,' 'Polyphemus,' 'Nereid,' and two sloops, under the command of George Murray; and I hope we shall get them off in less than a fortnight. Sir C. Pole will join the Channel fleet about the same time, and it is probable that Lord St. Vincent will, at the time, come in to the Ramhead, where he has taken a house.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Oct. 14, 1806.

My dearest Brother,

In consequence of the dissolution, the Speaker will fall upon the shoulders of government, if he does not come in for Oxford. He has it in his power to vacate Dobbin's seat whenever he chooses, and will probably do so now, if he is likely to succeed. You know probably that on the bringing forward of the Catholic question, the Dean substituted his name instead of my brother's as the candidate he wished to support for the Christ Church vacancy. Wyndham is of course out of the question, both on the same ground as far as that operates, and also because two university men could not sit together.

It is by no means desirable to have a contest between my brother and the Speaker on this ground, with Christ Church divided, or going mostly against my brother; and my opinion clearly is, that it is best for us all to let the Speaker come in quietly, which he will of course consider as a great civility, and which will also relieve me of one seat that I must otherwise have provided. This is also my brother's opinion; but he feels some difficulty in stating it to you as explicitly as he would otherwise do, because he says this is saddling himself upon you. I, who know that you do not wish these delicacies to prevent my stating to you exactly what is best for us all, have no hesitation in expressing my wish to be authorised by you to express to the Speaker my brother's disposition, not to oppose him. Cleave takes St. Asaph, and I suppose Randolph will take Bangor.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Downing Street, October 24, 1806.

My dearest Brother,

There is a chance of turning out Mr. Ferguson from the

county of Aberdeen, one of Lord Melville's most devoted adherents, and bringing in a General Hay, who is warmly supported by Lord Fife, if Dingwall (the old jeweller) can be prevailed upon to use his influence, which will decide no less than four votes. He is said to have expressed, on this occasion, a disposition to act according to the wishes of our family.

Do you think you can write, or dictate for Lord Temple to write, a guarded letter, requesting him to do this, and describing General Hay as the friend of Lord Fife, the old friend of your family, and Lord G's, &c., &c.

If this can be done, enclose the letter to me by return of post, and it will be sent to him through Perry, of the "Morning Chronicle," who is his nephew, and will not deliver it unless he thinks it likely to do good. But you will obviously see that what is done through these channels must be guardedly done.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Downing Street, Oct. 26, 1806.

My dearest Brother,

I trust your letter to Dingwall will answer the purpose. The difficulty about Abbot is a curious one, but I do not see how the Vice-Chancellor can object to his entering himself at the University. He will, at all events, be returned for another place.

The Prussians have been most certainly defeated, and I fear, very seriously. We have, however, hardly any particulars—nothing more than you will see in all the papers. Lord Morpeth was in the rear of the enemy, and had only picked up flying reports.

We have put up Sir S. Hood for Westminster, but Paull will stand, and that is enough to give trouble in such a place.

Ever most affectionately yours,

G.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Downing Street, Oct. 31, 1806.

My dearest Brother,

I have never sufficiently thanked you for the paper you sent me on the subject of the attack on Spanish America, and the precision and distinctness of which has really been invaluable to me. I now send you a project on this subject, on which I earnestly wish for your opinion with the least possible delay.

The fact on which it is founded is this:

Including Auchmuty's force of 3000 men, and what has sailed at different times from the Cape and St. Helena, there will be at Buenos Ayres 5500 men. Adding the 9th Dragoons now embarked for the same place 700, and the whole may be put at above 6000 men. As this force will of course have taken Monte Video, I reckon 3000 men, with the possession of that fortress, sufficient to maintain ourselves there. The garrison of the Cape is also, even after the sailing of these troops for Buenos Ayres, full 4500 strong, being at least 1000 more than is necessary.

Now working on these data:—No. I. of the enclosed requires only sending but one regiment of infantry from here to Madras to replace that which goes from thence on the service proposed, and the shipping arrangements for the transport of this regiment out to India, and of the 4000 men from Madras onwards, are already made, and the orders go out to-morrow.

No. II. supposes us to leave 3000 or even 3500 at Buenos Ayres; a like number at the Cape, and all the rest to go on to India. From Buenos Ayres to the Cape they will go in their own transports which brought them from the Cape to Buenos Ayres. At the Cape they will find fifty-gun and sixty-gun ships sufficient for their future transport.

The whole force and transport of No. III is therefore thus provided for.

That of No. IV. requires nothing more than the sending out 2000 Europeans from hence next autumn, and transports for 7000 men, which, with so much time before us, are both very easily managed here.

If this force, large as it is, (comparatively with the resources of Spain in America,) shall yet be deemed insufficient; a reinforcement of 5000 Sepoys from Bengal might sail in July, and follow the track of the others. Indiamen can (for I have ascertained the point,) be easily taken up here for their transport, and these, being armed, are their own convoy, and being big-bellied, will carry 500 men at least, and with them as much water and rice as that number of men can consume.

Here is the rough outline of the plan; pray consider it fully and suggest all you think material in objection or in improvement. No new Prussian news.

The following letters shew the uncertain instruments upon which the government was obliged to depend for carrying out its warlike projects.

MR. T. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Nov. 5, 1806.

My dearest Brother,

I will take care to send your parcel to Admiral Berkeley, and we shall have an early opportunity, as I am going to send out stores immediately to Bermuda, with the intention of gradually increasing that depôt for stores, repairs, and even for building of frigates; my chief temptation to this is the objection that I feel to our having no other dependance for these objects, except Halifax, which is for some months inaccessible, and always subject to bad chances in the possible case of war with America; whereas Burmuda is, and I hope always will be ours, and as

such, furnishes advantages infinitely beyond any that Halifax can supply.

Warren has played the devil; he has come home from the Chesapeake telling us that he could not get water and provisions, though the Chesapeake abounds in the facility of both, and he has added his regrets that he could not spare a single ship to wait upon the 'Eole' and 'Patriote,' and so that if the same post had not brought us the news of Strachan's activity having carried him back to the Chesapeake to watch the French, we should have been placed by Warren in the feverish state of his telling us that he had left two line-of-battle French in the Chesapeake, and two out of it, and that nevertheless, he thought it right to come home without sparing a single ship to watch them. I am sorry for it, but as far as I yet understand it, his conduct appears quite indefensible.

I have at last got Box's proposal before the Navy Board, with whom the marine contract rests, and if they approve of his proposal, I have promised to recommend an increase of the 1*s.* 6*d.* which he proposes; the Navy Board will, of course, receive other proposals, and I cannot interfere in their judgment on the contract, which I have done all I can to recommend to them, and will let Mr. Box know the result.

Sir S. Hood's squadron of 'Spencer,' 'Captain,' 'Theseus,' and 'Ganges,' have probably sailed, and will be followed next week by him in the 'Centaur,' to cruise as an advanced squadron off the Canaries; and we shall immediately send two line-of-battle with convoy to the West Indies, and shall send the 'Glory,' or some other of that class, besides another to replace the 'Neptune' to Lord Collingwood. Fremantle desires me to send home for Proby, to assist him here.

MR. T. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Nov. 8, 1806.

MY DEAREST BROTHER,

According to custom, after I had been tormented with the most feverish daily applications for carrying out the expedition, Stopford was detained one day by the transports not being ready, and the wind has since kept him till the letter of his last date; but he has positive orders to sail now, the first instant that the wind allows, whether the transports are ready or no. We shall send out a line-of-battle ship with the 'Blonde' and her convoy to the West Indies, and shall send a second line-of-battle with the next convoy, which will sail in a month, and will leave us then in sufficient force for the West Indies. Certainly, my object is that Hood's advanced squadron shall continue his cruise there, as he will make our great reliance in case of the escape of any French squadron; and we send out fast schooners to the Azores and to Madeira, in order to communicate with him. I had already promised Lord Hood's grandson in the 'Laurel' to join Sir Samuel Hood; and we had not meant to send more than one frigate with him; but I shall perhaps stretch a point to send Shipley's 'Comus' likewise with him, as another light frigate may be of service, and it is very desirable to put Shipley under such good command.

I have heard nothing of Warren since I wrote to him; but the whole of his conduct appears to be so indefensible, that I know not what can be said by him in extenuation. I have promised Keats a commodore's pendant, as well as Hood, and the rather because that will enable them to keep the marines. The truth is, that Warren is now good for nothing but fine weather and easy sailing; and he is no longer enough in earnest about the duties of his profession to go through them with credit to himself, and advantage to the service. I am sorry for it.

I have written to offer the 'Defence' to Temple Hardy, but he is still too ill, and is obliged to decline it. I have also the 'Dreadnought' to name to.

I shall write by the 'Decade' to Berkeley; I am looking out for a good master-builder to send out to Bermuda, and if you have any suggestions to make upon that subject, pray do not fail to send them either to me or to Berkeley. We have agreed that the post-office may establish such communication with Bermuda as may be found convenient.

Yours ever most affectionately,

T. G.

VISCOUNT HOWICK TO MR. T. GRENVILLE.

Downing Street, Nov. 11, 1806.

My dear Grenville,

When I appointed Mr. Grant naval officer at Madras, I was totally ignorant of Mr. Chinnery's previous appointment. When the statement was made to me of this circumstance by Mr. Chinnery's brother, I desired that the whole matter might be reported to you, as you only could then decide it; and I felt confident that your decision would be the fair result of an impartial examination of the case. Such, I am now persuaded it is; and if you think that the appointment justly belongs to Mr. Chinnery, and that the public interest is not likely to suffer by his holding it, I cannot have another word to say. I can only regret poor Mr. Grant's disappointment, whom I am not now likely to have the means of providing for in any other way.

Sir John Warren has just been here—I received him as I felt, very coldly. He says he lost no time; upon this point, however, his log only can give satisfactory evidence, and that, I hope, will be carefully examined. He admits that he did not touch at Bermuda, and says that it was not in his orders to do so. Be so good as to consult them, for if his orders were not

distinct and positive on this point, I have lost my memory altogether. All I desire upon this subject is a fair investigation, that if there has been any blame as to the expedition used by this squadron, I may not be made answerable for it.

I am, dear Grenville,
Ever yours sincerely,
HOWICK.

MR. T. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Admiralty, Nov. 17, 1806.

MY DEAREST BROTHER,

You will already have seen that Stopford has sailed to the Cape de Verd's with Crawfurd's expedition. Murray will sail the day after to-morrow, taking with him two sloops that will escort the 9th Dragoons from the Cape de Verd's to Plata, (where the sloops will remain for the river defence,) while Murray goes on to the Cape and South Wales, to pursue his expedition.

Our last accounts from Arbuthnot, have determined us to consider the French influence as so prevalent at Constantinople as to make it necessary for us to take the most decided steps; Sebastiani having required the Porte to renounce her alliance with England and Russia; I am reinforcing Collingwood with four sail, and the 'Formidable,' 'Illustrious,' 'Courageux,' and 'Terrible,' will sail quite immediately to join him; he will then be directed to send Duckworth with five, and Sir S. Smith to speak to the Grand Signior of Sebastiani's requisition in the Sea of Marmora, with four Russian ships out of the fifteen now in the Adriatic; two more of that Russian fleet will join four of ours which will remain off Sicily, under Hallowell's command till we can send out another flag, (G. Martin on whom we depended, having declined from the recent loss of his wife,) and for the protection of our Smyrna Consul

and merchants, I have sent the 'Glutton' which sails to-day. With this force and the 'Foudroyant,' which we shall probably send for the new flag when we have found him, Collingwood will have twenty-four, which seems to me an ample provision for the Channel fleet. . . .

I am, for the moment, under a new embarrassment, for the day before yesterday Sir C. Pole, whose election I have been waiting for the last three weeks, has suddenly declined taking the second in command (which he acccepted a month ago,) unless I would promise him the command of the Channel fleet when Lord St. Vincent retires; a promise which no consideration should induce me to engage myself under before hand. In addition to this, Cotton is just going to beg hard for six weeks absence, and yet (though I do not hold him high,) the list is such as hardly enables me to find tolerably safe men to replace him and Pole. I have written to consult Lord St. Vincent in order to hear whether he can propose anything that I should like: there is Colpoys or Montague, but I know not that either of them would go, and rather believe they would not, so that as you see, my distress for a tolerable second is very great, and if I had a first to find, it would be even greater. For Mediterranean additional flag, I am disposed to think of Saumarez or G. Campbell if they would go. I believe your African project is a very right one to look to; it was in contemplation if Hood's original attack had been early enough, and would have made the second act of that play; it may still be very right to do, whatever force is sent out to the West Indies.

The present military projects turn to Jamaica as the rendezvous, at which to assemble that part of the Plata force which can be well spared from them; Sir Arthur Wellesley is still pursuing this project but nothing is finally settled. In the meanwhile, the civil departments are, as appears to me, in a most wretched state. The Victualling Board cannot go on as it is, and the difficulty is, to find a right frame to put it in, and proper

persons to conduct it. We have overcome the sided contract, which is, at least, something; and I am, to-day, almost forcing the Navy Board to encourage the offers of Quebec oak and masts, for our dependence on Dantzic must be hourly precarious. The difficulties of this immense machine press heavily upon me.

The inefficiency of the various departments, that professed to carry out the intentions of the government, was, it appears, from the preceding statements as obvious half a century since, as within the last few months. Their blunders marred almost every well planned expedition, or else "their wretched state" so affected their arrangements, that the contemplated object of it became impossible. The attack on Mexico, a great enterprise, after having been well considered, appears to have been abandoned, in consequence of delays in these branches of the public service, having prevented operations at the proper time.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Downing Street, Nov. 7, 1806.

My dearest Brother,

This Westminster election is doomed to be the plague of all governments. Paull had got too far a-head to make it possible, in the opinion of those who best understood the subject, to start a fresh candidate with any hope of success. Nothing was, therefore, left but to endeavour to unite Sheridan's and Hood's interests, and you will see by the papers how imperfectly, and with what an ill-grace this has been done.

I confess I do not now entertain much hope of success; and besides this, the expense is beginning to be distressing to Hood;

and we must call upon some of our friends for some assistance, which is an unpleasant necessity.

Lord Duncannon's corps is in Marylebone, and he, himself, quite unfit for such a scene. Nor, has he any means of supporting the expense? Sheridan takes his own expense upon himself. But my distress is about Hood.

Many thanks for Dingwall. It is of great importance, but I fear not quite enough to turn the election, as was once thought. Both parties are, however, sanguine.

Ever most affectionately,

G.

In general the elections have gone as well as I expected; in some instances better; and even where our candidates have failed, it has generally happened that the persons chosen are also friendly.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Downing Street, Nov. 25. 1806.

My dearest Brother,

I am extremely obliged to you for your book, and also for your different suggestions. In a day or two I hope to send you the amended plan, such as it now stands. We found the seasons could not be made to answer for Panama, and we are, therefore, turning our attention to the east coast.

Pray write to Stevenson, and get from him a statement of his plans. I fancied I had already begged you to do so, but probably I omitted it.

You will see by the bulletins that there is an end of Prussia.

I have, this instant, read a letter from Elliot, enclosing one from you to him, about Lord Delvin's election.

You have certainly forgot that the decision of government, on the support of the old members, was suspended till I had

applied to you to know your wishes; and that it was not till you had expressed yourself perfectly indifferent as to Lord Delvin, that I wrote myself to Elliot, to tell him that the old questions were to be supported.

Of all men living, Elliot is the person who least deserves reproaches from any of us, being, unquestionably, the most zealous, and by far the most considerable and able friend we have, out of the line of our own immediate and near connections.

You see Newport has carried the election for Waterford. As Saltash is to depend on the uncertain issue of a petition, I take it for granted you will return Neville for Buckingham, instead of Sir W. Young, when he vacates.

Have you determined whom to bring in, instead of Newport? Who is Lady Henderson?

The First Lord of the Admiralty is still found intent upon supplying ships with captains, captains with ships, and admirals with stations. His notes afford curious estimates of the value of many famous commanders. Then comes notices of the great contemporaneous conflict in the heart of Germany; in which a reference to the future great captain, shows that his counsel was sought for an important expedition. A new danger menaced the country—the fruits of Bonaparte's intrigues with the Irish rebels in Paris.

MR. T. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

25th Nov., 1806.

MY DEAREST BROTHER,

I do not delay to thank you for your note of yesterday, although

Fremantle's visit to you will have informed you better of our actual state, than any letter of mine can do. I have determined, at all events, to get Saumarez for the Channel fleet, and shall this morning write for him to come to town. Lord St. Vincent writes me word to-day that he knows no man so capable of watching Brest, as Saumarez. My chief present difficulty is about Cotton, whose *claims* are hourly growing by serving in the Channel fleet to reach the command of it, for which he is, as I believe, entirely unfit. My present views for replacing Lord St. Vincent whenever he goes, rest with Collingwood and Duckworth, the first of whom must, I suppose, have the Channel, and the second the Mediterranean; but this is inconsistent with keeping Cotton; and yet it is not easy to remove him. If I could do that, I would immediately make Saumarez Vice, and second to Lord St. Vincent. But if I cannot get rid of Cotton, Saumarez must be third. Markham tells me that Cotton has already declined Newfoundland; shall I offer him Jamaica, instead of Dacres?

I have enquired about Calder, but I fear that his general reputation will not warrant the restoring him. Those who acquit him of want of courage, dwell, however, very much upon his extreme indecision in critical situations; and that defect produces almost as bad a result for command as downright fear. How can I weed the list of Admirals? It is a list of incurables.

You will have seen that Stopford is by this time half-way to the Canaries; and as Barrie reports six sail ready to put out from Brest, and a seventh very forward, the 'Centaur' with Hood will sail on Saturday.

I do not quite know what to do with the 'Patriote' and 'Eole.' Strachan with 'Cæsar' and 'Bellona' is enough for them; but if a squadron slips out of Brest, and runs for the Chesapeake, our two line-of-battle there might be in a scrape. Shall I send two more line-of-battle to Bermuda, as connected with the two at the Chesapeake? or shall I send them to strengthen Cochrane?

I sometimes incline to Bermuda, because the 'Ramilies' is already on the road to Cochrane, and another seventy-four will go with the next convoy to the West Indies. In the Mediterranean, I had a great fancy for our taking Cerigo, which commands the ordinary approach to the Dardanelles, and is a good outpost for the Morea and Adriatic likewise; but unluckily the Russians have a garrison there.

I now think of Milo, which is easy enough; Lord Keith recommends Candia, which is the most worth having without doubt, but then I fear it will make too large a demand upon our military force to hold it. We want one or two important naval points, defensible by small garrisons, to shut up the road to the Dardanelles when the French shall have taken the Porte under their own military protection.

Two mails are just arrived from Hamburgh, out of five due. By Thornton's letter of 14th, we find the Duke of Brunswick died of his wound on the 10th. Magdeburg is taken, and so is Lubeck, where Blucher was at length overpowered; but he is supposed, in his gallant and masterly retreat, to have killed 20,000 French, 3000 of whom were killed in the storming of Lubeck. France is drained of every soldier, to make the 300,000 with which Bonaparte is soon to be at Posen, to re-establish a Polish Monarchy.

The Bavarians occupy Dresden and Silesia. We have letters of the 3rd from Henry at Töplitz, where are the head-quarters of Klenaw, who commands the *cordon*, which the Austrians are drawing round Bohemia. The French were expected to take Stralsund.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

I send you two fresh papers, on which I much wish your opinion. You will see the eastern plan is proposed as reinforce-

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ment, not co-operation. The reason is from Sir Arthur Wellesley's representation of the difficulty of bringing the times and seasons to bear with correctness, and his apprehension lest a Sepoy force with so small a proportion of whites, should prove possibly inferior even to what may be collected against them should they land first, or should the enemy turn his whole force to that quarter first.

MR. T. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Dec. 5, 1806.

My dearest Brother,

I have seen Saumarez, who seems much pleased at the thought of being second in the Channel fleet. I told him he must begin by being third, but though he agreed to that, I thought it best not to make any ground of doubt or delay, and therefore I wrote a civil letter to Cotton to say, that I had destined him to the Newfoundland Station, and trusted that this arrangement which my view of the public service seemed to prescribe, would not be unacceptable to him.

I hear that he has got the rheumatism, and will probably be glad to come on shore; but as yet I have no answer from him.

I am sending Peake, the junior surveyor, with the master-builders of Woolwich and Plymouth, to make an immediate survey of all the ships of war of fifty guns and upwards, in the several ports, to see how soon we can patch up an additional fleet of ten or twelve sail for the Baltic in the spring, if it becomes necessary. I have no doubt by what I hear, that we can do so without breaking in upon our general stock either of ships or men, and I have sent home for Strachan, who will perhaps be the best man to command there. The 'Colossus,' goes to relieve the 'Cæsar,' and I have decided to make up the joint force I talked of for the Chesapeake and Bermuda; I likewise sent out an able shipwright to Bermuda, and we are sending there a large supply of stores.

We know no more of the King of Prussia, yet, since the 14th, than you do.

MR. T. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Dec. 6, 1806.

My dearest Brother,

I write one line to tell you that I have just received Sir Charles Cotton's answer, and you will be glad to hear that he is delighted with the Newfoundland command, and begs for some weeks leisure before he goes there, so that I have desired Saumarez to get himself ready; I have promised to make him a vice-admiral, and this arrangement has succeeded so far perfectly well; and will give me great satisfaction, while, as far as I can judge, it will be a very popular appointment in the fleet. He will hoist his flag in the 'San Josef.'

I want an active officer at Guernsey, in the room of Saumarez, for I suppose we shall be menaced by Bonaparte in the spring; G. Campbell is now got well, and I have some thoughts of him.

Yours affectionately.

T. G.

MR. T. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Dec. 10, 1806.

My dearest Brother,

Many thanks for your list, and for your remarks. Peake and his two shipwrights are actively pursuing their survey.

I am sorry that you throw doubts upon Strachan, because I had brought myself to think him the best for the Baltic, and I still know not who is so good.

Domett's nerves will not stand the test of responsibility, as I have fully experienced, and Pole I cannot think highly of for enterprise; Saumarez I want for the Channel, and Warren is not entitled, God knows! to any such mark of approbation as is

implied by such a command. I have, however, delayed any final orders for Strachan to come home, both Saturday and Sunday, as Lord Vincent will by that time be in town, and I shall like to have his opinion about Strachan, which I know he will give me, for I am in high favour with him. The King approves very much of Saumarez, and he will be promoted to a vice-admiral's flag, together with the six above him, but I do not mean to make any more rear-admirals, for our admirals' list wants abridging rather than prolonging.

We have no Plata news, and no Prussian news, and no French news, beyond what the papers give.

P.S. I think every hour adds to the certainty of great increasing mischief in Ireland. This is a most alarming feature in the gloomy picture of the present times; and what is to be done?

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Downing Street, Dec. 14, 1806.

MY DEAREST BROTHER,

You will easily suppose that just at this moment I have not much time for writing, but I cannot help thanking you for your letter respecting Ireland. You will since have seen that two convictions have taken place at Sligo, and one of them is of a very leading offender.

We have taken the most expeditious measures for increasing the regular force in Ireland; but I am still very desirous that the experiment should be made, of suppressing these disturbances without having recourse to the dreadful measure of proclaiming the counties, and arming, with the public authority, all the bad passions of the Irish magistracy and yeomanry.

When one considers from what class alone the representations for this purpose are and must be received, it cannot be wondered at that they should receive a little tincture from their wishes.

No trace, or next to none, has yet appeared in the disturbed

counties, of French influence or intrigue. That there are agents of France at work there, and that there always have been such, no one can doubt; but these disturbances appear to have been much more Irish in their origin than French.

Ever most affectionately,

G.

MR. T. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Dec. 25, 1806.

My dearest Brother,

Our last accounts from the Chesapeake describe one of the French ships as absolutely irreparable; and the other in so bad a state, as hardly to encourage repair; besides which, the French credit is so low there, that they can get no money to pay for the workmen, and their crews are daily deserting. Under these circumstances, Lord St. Vincent advises me to suspend, for the present, the sending out the 'Orion,' or any thing else additional to Bermuda. Your objections to Strachan have made me also pause upon recalling him from his squadron; and in lack of active flags, I am disposed to look to Keats for the Baltic, who is within reach of a rear-admiral's flag whenever I please. In the meantime, I am trying to replace Saumarez at Guernsey by Martin, as Admiral Campbell is not yet stout enough to accept it, although I offered it to him. These violent winds have made Lord St. Vincent of opinion, with us, that as soon as Hood and Murray have had fair law, the Rochefort squadron may leave their work to frigates only, so that Keats will then relieve Hervey for the present, who wants to come home; and with Hood advanced, Winthorp and two sloops more to the westward, and the Finisterre squadron, we hope we have nothing to fear in taking home the Rochefort squadron.

There has been a large assembly of troops, about 30,000, near Ferrol; but no naval preparations whatever, nor any means of

transport. We hear whispers of troops and transports collecting in Holland, which might threaten Ireland, but they will hardly venture it; and things look a little less bad there. But still, God knows! they are bad enough.

We are now sure of from ten to twelve sail ready by the end of February for the Baltic, if they are wanted, and we are beginning on them.

Mr. Thomas Grenville was not the only Minister who appealed to the Marquis of Buckingham as an authority. The subject in the instance now produced, was one of equal interest to those which his brothers had submitted to his attention, and as will be seen, frequently elicited his remarks and suggestions.

EARL SPENCER TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Whitehall, Dec. 14, 1806.

My dearest Lord,

As I find from Lord Grenville that we are not likely to have the pleasure of seeing you very soon in town, I take the liberty of troubling you with a letter, on a subject upon which, if you had been in town, I should have been very glad to have had some conversation with you. The subject I mean, is the best and most practicable mode of carrying into execution the decision of the Training Act of last year, which will require a good deal of detail in the several counties, in order to set it to work with regularity and effect, and if it should not be set a going on a right principle at first, will most probably produce much confusion, when the machinery of the lieutenancy business is not in such good order as I know you keep it in. The

return for the several counties are not yet all come in, there being five or six still wanting, and till they do come in, we cannot make the appointment in the Privy Council; as soon, however, as that is made (which I am assured will now not be much longer delayed,) we shall have to send instructions to the counties to proceed upon their ballots, and when that process is over, some arrangements must be made for the training. As the previous steps are all made to proceed according to the militia system, I do not apprehend much difficulty will be likely to arise in respect to them, but in the distribution of districts, and appointment of superintending officers for the training, the resource being quite new, I suppose many difficulties and embarrassments will occur, and a good outline of instruction for this purpose is what I should most wish to procure. Now, as I know nobody better able to furnish suggestions for such a purpose than your Lordship, and as I have had experience enough of your kindnsss to me upon every occasion, to warrant me in hoping that you will readily excuse my troubling you upon this; I have ventured to beg that if anything which you may think worth communicating should occur to you on this view of the subject, you would have the goodness to let me know your sentiments upon it, which cannot fail to be of material service in drawing up any regulations which it may be necessary to circulate.

You will be glad to hear Lady Moira is returned from Bath, much better than she was; though I think not quite equal to the fatigues of a London winter.

Pray make my best respects to Lady Buckingham, and believe me, my dear Lord,

Your very faithful,
Humble servant,
SPENCER.

The attention of the King to every subject, brought

under his observation, indicate those habits of business, and that love of method, which distinguished him as long as he was able to undergo the labour they imposed. Every communication of his First Lord of the Admiralty, was acknowledged by an autograph letter in the following form.

THE KING TO MR. T. GRENVILLE.

Windsor Castle, Oct. 3, 1806.

The King has received Mr. Grenville's letter, and the accompanying dispatches conveying the agreeable intelligence of the capture of four French frigates by Sir Samuel Hood's squadron, and of a fifth by that under Sir Thomas Louis; but his Majesty's satisfaction is very much lessened by the severe misfortune which has befallen Sir Samuel Hood, of whom he has ever had the highest opinion.

GEORGE R.

Sir Archibald Alison dwells with considerable severity on the policy of the English government towards Russia during Napoleon's compaign against Alexander in 1806—7, stigmatising the administration as a party whose minds had been persecuted by long and impassioned opposition to Mr. Pitt. It is scarcely necessary to state that this description, if true to any extent, of the rest of the government, is not applicable in the slightest degree to the Grenvilles. Frequent evidence has been given of their identification with the brightest theories and most sagacious conclusions of their illustrious friend, and every valuable measure suggested by him always

obtained their warm and zealous support. Lord Grenville was at the head of the government at this period; but Lord Howick was Secretary for Foreign Affairs, and Lord Henry Petty, Chancellor of the Exchequer, to whom belonged the duty of accepting or refusing the proposals of the Emperor of Russia. Apparently Lord Howick was everything that could have been desired as the head of the Foreign Office; and his coadjutor a model minister of finance; at least it is indisputable that the manner in which they received the demands for assistance made by Alexander to enable him to resist Napoleon, does not deserve all the censure it has received.

Immense sums had already been lavished by England in subsidizing the continental powers, with so little advantage to either party, that a prudent minister might be excused for betraying some hesitation in wasting more millions in this direction. The great object of these investments was to restrain the encroachments of France; but if this object had been defeated when several of the most powerful States were associated for the purpose of obtaining it, there was very small reason for anticipating a different issue, when all these States had been overthrown by the conqueror, except one. The notorious unskilfulness and folly which had led to the recent startling reverses in Germany, may also have exercised some influence on the minds of the English ministers, and determined them towards a middle course. The Czar asked for the loan of six millions sterling from the government; they offered to sanction a loan to that amount to be contracted for by English capitalists, if the existing duties on English

merchandise levied in Russia were levied solely in British harbours, and applied to pay the interest of the loan. This reasonable proposition, Sir Archibald Alison denounces as "an instance of parsimony and blindness, beyond all example, calamitous and discreditable,*" an opinion, the justice of which we do not admit.

* "History of Europe," Chap. XLIV. 23.

1807.

PROGRESS OF THE WAR—OPPOSITION OF THE KING TO THE CATHOLIC CLAIMS—RESIGNATION OF THE GRENVILLE CABINET—THE NEW MINISTRY—CRY OF "CHURCH AND KING"—PROCEEDINGS OF THE OPPOSITION—SIR ARTHUR WELLESLEY—PROGRESS OF NAPOLEON.

THE year 1807 did not commence under more favourable auspices for England than 1806; indeed, on the continent, there had lately appeared an increase of unfavourable circumstances. The Emperor Napoleon appeared to be proceeding to universal dominion with the stride of a giant; bestowing kingdoms on the members of his family as though he intended to parcel out the whole of Europe amongst them. His brilliant military successes seemed to paralyze the continental governments; of which Russia alone now carried on the war with any energy.

But to give stability to his conquests, qualities were demanded, which he did not possess. Generosity, clemency, magnanimity, seemed never thought of when their influence would have done him incalculable service; and vengeance was sure to be exercised, even when the

insignificance of the object ought to have secured its safety. Consequently the various Powers he conquered he never subdued, and the one he perpetually menaced, he failed to intimidate; while the merciless executions of men whose only crime was their patriotism, produced no other effect than to increase the hatred of the nations with whom he was at war, which, weighed down by his domination, impatiently waited their opportunity to make a struggle for freedom.

The English government longed to employ the available military force of the country in some enterprise that would afford a fair prospect of success, but on the continent and in the Peninsular, Napoleon appeared equally invulnerable. Our operations in Calabria had removed the bad impression left by our proceedings in Holland. Notwithstanding that success, however, the more experienced military authorities could not be got to sanction anything in the shape of a descent, except at a distance very remote from the French resources.

The position of the Ministry was daily becoming more insecure; but this did not cause them for a moment to interrupt their onerous labours, or lessen their zeal in the service of the crown.

The subject of the next two notes was for some time a favourite financial resource of Ministers, but the Chancellors of the Exchequer of later days, have not regarded it as the panacea it appeared to their predecessors. "Table B," has not been preserved, or the promised advantages of this discovery might have been pointed out; they were "to enable us to carry on war for ever, with no perceptible increase of taxes." In a time of double income-

tax and projected loans, such a plan for providing for the expenses of a protracted war, would be extremely welcome to the nation, with the proviso, carefully added by Lord Grenville, *if it succeeds.*

It is scarcely necessary to add, that the sinking fund was a prominent feature in Mr. Pitt's financial system, and although its alleged advantages have been called in question by many eminent writers since his time, it still possesses an eloquent advocate in one of our popular historians, who has treated the subject with great care.* Lord Grenville's ideas respecting the military training of the kingdom, will be found equally suggestive.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Jan. 9, 1807.

Many thanks to you for the trouble you have taken about the stamp duty, which will be a useful addition to our revenue, though I trust we shall not want it, at least, for this year.

I send you in great confidence the three first tables, (no more are yet printed) of a statement I am preparing of the measure now in contemplation. I am not sure whether you will understand them. The idea is, 1st. to charge as much on the war-taxes as will by a sinking fund of five per cent. carry itself round in fourteen years, and so on, *ad infinitum*. And, 2nd. at the end of ten years, to take the excesses of the sinking fund beyond what will always keep the sinking fund equal to the interest of the unredeemed debt.

All the details of the plan, and its bearing on the public, or the stockholders you will see when the statement and tables are finished. In the meantime, table B. will show that if it succeeds

* Alison's "History of Europe," Vol. VI., Chap. XLI

it will enable us to carry on war for ever with no perceptible variance of taxes—a thing so romantic, that perhaps one should be laughed at for stating it, if one had not one's tables behind to prove it.

I wish you were here to discuss all this, and fifty other things.

You know that with a five per cent. sinking fund, a capital returns itself in sixty-four years. In ten years from this time, the present sinking fund will be equal to the interest of the present unredeemed debt, viz., twelve millions sinking fund, to two hundred and forty millions (money capital) of the then unredeemed part of the present debt.

Downing Street, Jan. 14, 1807.

My dearest Brother,

I hope the tables I have sent you, in succession as I got them from the printer, will have put you in possession of the outline of our great plan, to which I look with a confidence not, I trust, too sanguine, but certainly very much so. I am preparing a statement of its general principles to which these tables are to save us explanations. Another separate statement respecting the particular operation of the plan on the interests of the public creditor is also in great forwardness, and I want to know whether you could undertake to get it speedily and correctly (for both are necessary) printed for me at Buckingham. If you can, and will take that trouble upon yourself, I will send it to you for that purpose. It will not be long, but comprise about eight or ten folio sheets of writing.

It must be printed in quarto of the same size, and as nearly as may be of the same sort of type as those tables.

You remember the idea I mentioned to you respecting the just execution of the Training Bill. We are now getting this a little more into shape, and shall much want your aid. You will recollect that my notion was (and is) to divide the Kingdom

into about twelve districts, which would comprise about four counties each, taking two or three of the little counties together, and reckoning them as one.

I then propose, that we should select in every such district, one county to be trained for this year, at its full proportion of 200,000 men. This would of course make one quarter of the whole, or about 50,000 men, and so go through the districts in four years, balloting the whole numbers and training one fourth of the whole in each year.

To execute this plan, it is most essential that our first choice should fall upon those counties where we have lord-lieutenants attached to the government, and disposed and capable of concerting with us all the details which will, in the first year, be of difficult execution, but will, when the machine is once set in motion be easily copied next year by the adjoining counties, and so on in a regular rotation.

If the number of 50,000 is thought too small to go on with, on a permanent system (I do not think it is), we may easily take next year two counties in each district, instead of one; but I am anxious that, in the first year we should not embarrass ourselves with more than one.

All this statement is, as you will long ago have seen, preparatory to asking you whether you will lend us your assistance this year, by making Bucks the first to be trained in its district, which will probably include Oxford, Northamptonshire, and Bedfordshire, in none of which counties could we have the same sort of assistance you could give us, not to speak of the general aid you would give to the setting the whole thing on foot.

When we have pretty well fixed upon our counties, we should then try to bring the lord-lieutenants of these counties together, so that Lord Spencer may settle with them all the necessary details; which can only be done by such a meeting, not too numerous for business, and yet numerous enough to bring forward most of the local difficulties that are likely to occur.

There is a report from the Hague of a victory obtained by the French over the Russians. It is likely enough, but the account is very vague. Of Buenos Ayres nothing more; but I am rather a believer in that story.

To add to the difficulties of Ministers at this period, a movement took place in Ireland, than which, both for them and its object, nothing could have been more untimely. It appears that the Roman Catholics in that country, aware that many persons of influence belonging to the government, had so far pledged themselves to forward the removal of their disabilities, that they had resigned their positions in a former administration when they found it impossible to carry out a measure of relief, thought it a favourable opportunity to press their claims. They therefore assembled, and proceeded through the legitimate course of agitation, till their proceedings attracted the attention of the authorities both in London and Dublin. Their cause was recognised by the ablest members of the Ministry, who were extremely anxious to advance it by any means within their power; but they knew that there was an obstacle to contend against, for the removal of which they could entertain very little hope. The sovereign was strongly opposed to any concession, believing that his coronation oath bound him to resist whatever tended to subvert the Protestant religion as by law established, and resolutely set his face against everything like an arrangement to put power, as he considered, in the hands of popery. Against this impression they found themselves almost helpless; still, so anxious were they for the realisation of what appeared to them a great public benefit, that

they used every argument and representation at their command, to impress on the mind of the King its absolute necessity. The official correspondence on the subject, which has more than once been printed,* renders minute details of the negotiation unnecessary; attention, however, should be directed to the evidence in Lord Grenville's letter, that he objected to the proceedings of the agitators as likely to produce no other result than to embarrass the friends of the Irish Catholics in the government.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Downing Street, Feb. 10, 1807.

My dearest Brother,

You will perhaps be more concerned than surprised to hear that we are once more involved in all the difficulties of 1801 about the Catholic question. You are doubtless no stranger to what has been going on upon that subject in Ireland. The matter is now brought to a point. They have put it definitively to us to say what we will do, and there is no doubt that, whatever our answer may be, their petition will be presented.

I had hoped that a solution for the difficulty might have been found, by expressing to the Catholics, in answer to their question, the disapprobation of government as to the renewal of the petition, or the agitation of the question of seats in parliament, or admission to the higher offices of government; not because we think those things wrong, but because the sense of parliament has so recently been expressed against them. But granting to them, on other grounds, the introduction of two clauses into the Mutiny Bill—the one to enable the King to grant military commissions of any description to all his subjects without exception; and the other, to entitle the Catholics serving in

* Correspondence of Viscount Castlereagh, Vol. IV., p. 374.

the army to a toleration, by law, for the free exercise of their religion.

In this form a dispatch was drawn, and was last night submitted to the King, whose answer, received this morning, is perfectly calm and collected; but such as to leave no hope of his consenting even to this measure, softened as it is by all that could recommend or palliate it to him.

We shall to-night begin our deliberations on this distressing circumstance, but I do not myself see how they can possibly lead to any conclusion but one.

We have at least the satisfaction of having done some good, and certainly not disgraced ourselves or our friends by our twelve months administration, and you know that to me as the task was from the beginning most irksome, so the release cannot but be pleasing, provided I should have weight enough with my friends to keep them, as I am fully resolved to keep myself, out of even the appearance of struggling for a fresh representation of this short-lived piece.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Feb. 11, 1807.

I have just time to tell you that the business I mentioned yesterday is, I trust, in a train of being satisfactorily arranged: a thing which I am bound to be glad of in itself, and which I must not, therefore, grumble at, as it concerns me.

Ever most affectionately,

G.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Downing Street, Feb. 11, 1807.

My dearest Brother,

I had only time to write to you a few hurried lines yesterday. The King has consented to our proposing to parliament

the two clauses in the Mutiny Bill, which I mentioned to you.

I am very apprehensive that this will not stop the intended petition; nor, indeed, do we mean to offer it as a compromise for that purpose; but only to express to the Catholics our entire disapprobation of the attempt to renew, by such a petition, the agitation of a question on which the sense of parliament has been so recently and decidedly expressed.

There are, as I conceive, among the Irish Catholics, two distinct bodies: the one desirous of pressing this thing for the purpose of distressing the government, or at least of disuniting the Catholics from them; the other, willing to repose in us the sort of confidence you describe; and sensible of the extreme impolicy for their own sakes of discussing the question, at a time when every body knows it cannot be carried, and when a division upon it in parliament can only tend to pledge more persons against them. But of these two bodies, as is most usual, the more violent leads, or rather drives the more moderate, who are afraid of losing what they call their influence and popularity with the body at large.

Undoubtedly, if Milner, or any one else, could persuade the latter to declare themselves, and to avow that they will no longer be led into acts contrary to their own opinions, great good would result from it. But I do not believe that he or any one else has sufficient weight with them for the purpose, and perhaps his going over there, merely for that purpose, would do more harm than good. Of this harm I am no judge, not knowing how he stands with them, or they with him.

The undertaking is, to be sure, not a difficult one, to prove to any moderate and reasonable men that they cannot possibly gain, and must inevitably lose, by any petition now. But to preach to the interested, the violent, or the ignorant, is a task, the success of which does not depend much upon the force of reason.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Downing Street, Feb. 13, 1807.

My dearest Brother,

We got last night an account that the Catholic meeting had unanimously resolved that this was a proper time to petition, and had in fact, put themselves wholly into Mr. Keogh's hands. And we received at the same time a printed copy of Keogh's speech, which I suppose you have seen, and which for its intemperance and inflammatory tendency, has hardly ever been equalled.

I still think it is not too late to remonstrate with those who have not the same views, and to ask them whether this is the course likely to obtain favour from the King, the parliament, or the people in England.

They know their petition cannot be carried—they contrive to embarrass the only public men who are friendly to their cause, and put upon us the necessity of either breaking up the government for their sake, and giving it over into the hands of their avowed opponents, or of ranging ourselves also in opposition, not to the cause itself, but to the time, and still more to the manner in which it is brought forward, without having given government, even the time to deliberate upon it, much less the means of reconciling the innumerable difficulties which attend their cause, and above all to the public avowal of the sentiments and language of Mr. Keogh, which of themselves are enough, without any other cause, to create insurmountable obstacles to their success here.

All these topics ought, I think, still to be pressed on those who have been misled into this imprudent and precipitate course. And I should hope that these considerations, coupled with the mark of good will which we are actually about to give, will be sufficient still to prevent the actual adoption of such a step. You best

know whether you can urge them on any individuals with any effect.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Downing Street, Feb. 20, 1807.

MY DEAREST BROTHER,

I return the letters you sent me. You may easily imagine that the object to which they relate has not been out of my thoughts, but you know this is one of the points that no government can completely control, much less one constituted as ours is. I know very few of the members of the committee, but I dont think the composition of it as good as it might have been.

On the particular point of the inviolability of life interests, I am confident both Lord Howick and Lord H. Petty think rightly, indeed the latter so expressed himself in parliament. Bankes is the chairman of the committee, and I had heard from other quarters, that he was in general disposed to be right-headed, but there seems to be some among them whom it would be difficult to describe in the same manner. On the whole, we must do the best that the case will admit, if possible to keep the committee right, and if not, to counteract in the House any error into which they may fall. To refuse a committee was impossible, but I think it might have been better composed.

We have to-day the account that the Dublin meeting has voted the petition, but with circumstances of so much intemperance as must materially injure their cause, and may still create disunion among them, so as to prevent the impression being given here that the whole Catholic interest of Ireland is in the hand of Mr. Keogh.

What you have written cannot but do good.

Yours most affectionately.

G.

Mr. Grenville's estimate of General Whitelock in the following note proved perfectly correct: he so shamefully mismanaged the expedition, in an evil hour placed under his command, that he was subsequently brought to a court-martial, cashiered, and dismissed the service. He appears to have been selected by Mr. Wyndham. The opinion of the First Lord of the Admiralty upon all these distant combinations is unequivocally expressed, and his account of the plans he could not prevent, prepares the reader for their failure.

MR. T. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Admiralty, Feb. 17, 1807.

My dearest Brother,

I have been so harrassed by all this strange misconduct of Stopford, that I could find no time for myself, and therefore desired Fremantle to explain it to you. Stopford has suffered himself to be over-persuaded by Crawfurd, and by Hope of the 'Theseus,' but the disobedience of orders is so flagrant, and might have been so dangerous, as we had for so many cases relied on the permanency of this squadron, that I have determined to try Stopford as well as Popham, and I wrote yesterday to the King, (with whom Stopford is a great favourite,) to tell him so. In the meantime, Hood has acted like a steady officer in remaining at Madeira, although without one ship of his squadron. I have immediately ordered the 'Captain' and 'Ganges' to rejoin him, and the 'Defence' will follow, so that he will make a squadron of four sail, to which I have directed him to add the 'Theseus,' and to send Stopford home with the 'Spencer' if he can recover them. I have likewise told him to take the 'Sibylle' under his command, and to continue with his former orders till the beginning of May. Our best chance of recovering the troops from this

abominable deviation is, that the 'Fly,' (which sailed five days after Murray, and followed him to Praga, with orders to go to Plata,) shall still overtake him at the Cape, and induce him to go across from thence to Plata, if he shall have overtaken Crawfurd and Stopford, who are evidently running away with the expedition for their own purposes.

Wyndham is sending out Whitelock to command at Plata; I know not why, for I do not believe he is a bit better than Auchmuty; he will be directed to send a sloop round Cape Horn to Juan Fernandez, with orders to Crawfurd, either to come to him at Plata, or to proceed on his Chili projects, as may appear best to Whitelock when he arrives at Plata. For my own part, I am more than ever convinced that all these distant combinations are of necessity subject to so many chances, that I have little stomach to them; but in spite of my feeble opposition, our military projectors are running after one expedition, and one general with another and another, till (in military language) the batallions are all clubbed, and no man knows where to find an entire company.

The 9th Dragoons are in a state that places us in the most entire ignorance; when Stopford made himself Crawfurd's Admiral, he detached (as had been intended) the 9th to Plata, and the day that he sailed, viz. the 11th, but when Murray arrived at Praga, he found a letter from Lord Collingwood, to say that Buenos Ayres was retaken, and he immediately, on the 20th, despatched the 'Olympia' to try to overtake the 9th, by which it is evident that Murray had himself no notion of trying to recover Plata, so that this chance of recovery depends entirely on the 'Fly' overtaking Murray at the Cape, by following him thither from Praga.

MR. T. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Feb. 23, 1807.

My dearest Brother,

I agree with your statement respecting the increase of Sir S. Hood's squadron, and have directed some one of Lord St. Vincent's to join Hood immediately, and shall then direct Hood to send home the 'Theseus' as well as the 'Captain.'

I have likewise claimed for the navy, the Fort prison, which we are to have, and which will, I hope, furnish some help to us from the prison-ships, and will see how far we can pursue also the idea you recommend, though my naval counsellors tell me that we shall find but few veterans.

We have not yet heard of the 'Defence,' but we hope there is not yet any ground for alarm, more especially as Ekins is a very excellent officer.

The 'Curaçoa' has been a very gallant business. I am going to give medals to the four captains, to knight Brisbane, and to promote the four lieutenants. I am the more glad to do this, because, being determined to try Stopford as well as Popham, I am glad to show the navy that we are as attentive to them as to demand subordination from them. The Porte has declared war against Russia, and Walinsky with all the Russians are gone to Malta; but we have no letters yet from Arbuthnot to know what he is about with Sir T. Louis. The Russian Minister Budberg has the modesty to propose that a Russian admiral shall command the combined naval force at the Dardanelles! Denmark is still amicable in language, and my colleagues are not anxious yet for the Baltic squadron. Strachan dislikes the Baltic; I shall perhaps relieve Keats by Strachan, and send Keats if anybody goes.

The position of the Ministry created considerable distrust in its chief, and he began to look about him for

additional support. With this object an approach was made towards a negotiation with Mr. Canning, but it produced no results. In the private letters of Lord Grenville, it is apparent that he was far more desirous of discontinuing his connection with the government, than of making any strenuous effort to maintain it. He was quite as diligent in his labours as ever, but felt as little confidence in himself as in his colleagues.

LORD GRENVILLE TO EARL TEMPLE.

Dropmore, Feb. 23, 1807.

My dear Lord Temple,

The point about Rose is, I think, never very likely to come much into discussion, because I see so very little chance of success in this other project, which could alone make Rose's case worth considering. If this should turn out otherwise, I need not tell you how anxious I should be to consult any wishes of yours as far as it could be done; but I cannot conceal from you that I think your own consideration would be very much lowered in the public opinion by the appearance of your resting on such a point, and most certainly if one should persuade Lord Sidmouth to give up his objections to acting with Canning, it would not be very seemly to state that we have difficulties in acting with Rose.

All this is however, I fear, matter of very remote speculation. I have explained to my brother that the difficulties with Lord Howick are perhaps not less than those with Lord Sidmouth, and that he may do something towards removing them.

But it is manifest that remove[illegible] before I could see Canning; for otherwise, I [illegible] generalities, in speaking to him, [illegible] liberal or manly way of talking [illegible] I must risk holding out to him [illegible]

not be able to realise without breaking up the government—a thing which one must do if necessary when the occasion shall arise by Lord Grey's death, or otherwise, but which it would neither be wise nor indeed justifiable to anticipate.

I will try to answer your father's letter to-morrow, but to-night I have neither time nor eyes for it.

Ever most affectionately yours,

G.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Dropmore, Feb. 24, 1807.

My dearest Brother,

Lord Temple sent me down your letter here; but I am much afraid the case will not soon arise, which would lead to the discussion of the point you mention. Should it do so, I have most assuredly every possible reason to wish to pay the utmost attention to every feeling of yours and his on the subject, though certainly in such a case I should have a good deal to say to you both, before I could bring myself to set Lord Temple in the light of a person wounded and sore at George Rose's attacks. But all this is, I fear, very superfluous, and at least very premature speculation. My colleagues are little disposed to enter into such a negotiation now. When the case arises, they must do so, or I must leave them to fight the battle by themselves. But I do not think it fair to anticipate such a struggle, by requiring them to enter into provisional engagements for cases that may never exist.

I have, as you will see by the date of this note, given myself a few holidays, after the great exertion I had made for bringing [illegible] which is now fairly landed.

[illegible] in beating out some ideas [illegible], and had partly occurred [illegible] The only point in which I

do not feel satisfied, is that we have done in the last twelve months all we could.

These ideas I now send to you for correction. You will consider them as very crude notions on a subject with which I am less acquainted than I ought to be. I feel very much persuaded that even this Session ought not to pass away without some further measures on this great subject. What was done last year is certainly enough to put our ordinary recruiting on a better footing than we found it, and possibly to enable us to keep up the army to its present numbers. But it cannot be relied on for doing much more; and the times require much more.

The accounts from the armies, Russian and Prussian, are so bad (I mean not so much from any positive disaster as from the hopelessness of any success,) that I have no doubt this spring will once more produce a complete submission of the continent under the name of peace.

To this we shall probably be no parties; and then we must be prepared by the autumn to meet here or in Ireland, or both, the influx of this overwhelming tide.

The time is surely not too great even now for such a preparation; and whatever measures can best increase, consolidate, and organise our means of resistance, must be looked to, perhaps, with a view to the salvation of the country.

Yet on these points I always feel diffident; and though I am at this moment very much enamoured with the result of my speculations, I say to you on this point still more than on all others,

Si quid novisti rectius,

G.

LORD GRENVILLE TO LORD TEMPLE.

Tuesday Night.

DEAR LORD TEMPLE,

If you can arrange an interview to-morrow evening, I should

be glad to meet Canning at your house or Wellesley's, or wherever may best suit him.

I must be at the Queen's House at two, but I could ride up immediately after breakfast either to-morrow or Thursday, to my little cottage at Hampstead, if that would be better.

Ever most affectionately yours.

G.

LORD GRENVILLE TO EARL TEMPLE.

Downing Street, Feb. 28, 1807.

MY DEAR LORD TEMPLE,

The matter in question is one which is attended with much more difficulty, and requires much more management and consideration than appears to be understood.

My wishes on the subject cannot be doubted, but the steps to be taken on the subject must be left to me to arrange, if confidence is placed in my disposition; and an attempt to go on faster than the carriage will drive, can only overturn it.

I am going to the Museum at one, but if you can call about four, I think I should probably be at liberty.

Ever yours.

G.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Downing Street, March 2, 1807.

MY DEAREST BROTHER,

I am not at all surprised that the project I sent to you appears to you to be too difficult to be undertaken, for although I am very much alive to the possible advantages of it, I had by no means overlooked the difficulties with which its execution was likely to be attended. If you can suggest anything of the same nature, or of any other nature, more likely to be effectual, I should not object to it for being less systematic. But with my

view of Russian politics, which every hour confirms, I feel great doubt whether I could be justified in letting this Session expire without some decisive and vigorous measure, to provide against a danger which I feel approaching fast upon us.

Pray, therefore, let me have the benefit of whatever occurs to you on the subject.

Sullivan's being chosen could do no good. You are very good to think of it, but Lord Spencer and Lord Buckinghamshire are two, nor could I in any way do any good in that quarter by an arrangement of that description.

I most fully agree with you that now or never is the case; and yet the difficulties are so great that I fear it must not be now, and therefore never.

My brother has been speaking to me with the utmost openness and kindness about his own situation. It is unfortunately but too manifest that in the way in which I most looked to his aid, and in which it was most wanted, he can give me none. I mean in House of Commons debate. What to do about that, and innumerable other difficulties I know not.

Sir John Duckworth commenced his enterprise successfully, by forcing the Dardanelles, and had he fulfilled his instructions by attacking Constantinople, while the Sultan and his subjects were panic-struck by the apparent imminence of their danger, the objects of this expedition must have been gained. But he allowed himself to be cajoled by General Sebastiani, the clever representative of the French Court at Constantinople, who caused the Turkish officials to amuse him with promises, whilst the city was rapidly and secretly being placed in a state of defence, and in a few days the admiral's position became so critical, that he was obliged to return with all his ships, the way he came.

The enterprise, however, was not without advantageous results. A division of the fleet under the command of Rear-admiral Sir Sidney Smith, when the armament was forcing the passage of the Dardanelles, on the 19th of February, effected the destruction of the Turkish vessels of war, anchored close to formidable batteries, consisting of a line-of-battle ship of 64 guns, four frigates, three corvettes, one brig, and two gun-boats.

Two communications are added: a very warlike budget from the First Lord of the Admiralty, and an equally interesting exposition of his private feelings and sentiments, from the First Lord of the Treasury.

MR. T. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Admiralty, March 6, 1807.

My dearest Brother,

An unusual increased press of business with Cabinet and House of Commons, has left me not a single instant to write to you, though God knows I have every day enough to say to you. I will inquire about Captain Haswell, and see what I can do for him. I have made no such charge as you allude to against Popham, because, though there is much to question in his whole conduct, it seemed most prudent to confine the charge to the one simple and undeniable proposition, viz., that being ordered to carry out a force to the Cape and for India, he had no justification for going a buccaneering to South America. Young, who is President, is so correct and so well versed in Admiralty orders, that I am persuaded he will not let the Court run loose upon private conversations of which no traces can be found, and our counsel and solicitor, who are well instructed in the case, being on the spot to act as prosecutors, I trust the case will

have fair play, and if it has, there can be but one result of more or less of condemnation.

Hood has 'Captain,' 'Ganges,' 'Defence,' and 'Achille.' We know nothing of Constantinople by Arbuthnot, because he sent his dispatches by 'Nautilus' which is not arrived, but we know by the Turkish Minister, that Waliñsky and all the Russians had gone to Malta in consequence of the Porte declaring war against Russia; and, therefore, Louis will probably have acted before now. It appears that Lord Collingwood has given five sail to Duckworth to go to the Dardanelles, which makes the whole squadron there consist of eight. As soon as hostilities commence, there are 5000 men ready to go with Hallowell from Sicily to Alexandria, and 2000 to take possession of Milo, or any other of the most advantageous positions which may seem most desirable.

The Russians have enough to do against Bonaparte; there seem to have been two very bloody actions on the 6th and 8th, in which, I think it appears, that the French had an advantage, but the Russians fight like tigers, and the French cannot afford the daily loss of these constantly bloody engagements. The Russians neither give nor take quarter, and I have seen a letter from a French officer at Hamburgh, who says, that in the battle of the 6th, where he was wounded, 6000 Russians broke in upon a body of 14,000 French cavalry, and though with great loss, the Russians so broke them that they could not rally again the whole day.

Lord Grenville had mentioned to me his military notions, and I had told him that I was afraid he did not enough consider the prevailing opinions of, and respecting the militia, which I did not believe could be brought to undergo so great a change. I have no doubt that your opinion will be decisive with him; but army we must somehow or other have. If the Russians and French should tire of these daily combats, and patch up a peace, we shall certainly have the menace of attack on Ireland for the

autumn. We are impatient for letters from Lord Hutchinson. I think the advance of the Russians into Wallachia and Moldavia will be so odious at Vienna, that it will tell against any hopes there might have been of co-operation from thence. My colleagues cannot be worked up into any Baltic interest in the present moment, though I think we should be stirring there. We have reports of a Dutch sixty-four and frigate from Texel, and three frigates sailing from Goree to East Indies with troops; but Markham does not think they are out. I am not so confident.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Downing Street, March 7, 1807.

My dearest Brother,

I return you Lord Fingall's letter, from which it is plain nothing more can be made of him. The accounts from Ireland seem, however, to indicate that the matter will not, for the present, be much more pressed; but it will remain a rankling sore.

I need not tell you how sincerely I participate in the uneasiness you express on the other subject of your note. I had a long conversation upon it two days ago with your son, the result of which he will have reported to you. The committee is, I most sincerely believe, entirely out of the hands of government, who, as you probably know, have not even named the chairman. What I hear of the language of the leading persons among them, corresponds entirely with the opinions of Lord Howick and Lord H. Petty, as stated to your son, respecting the sacred and inviolable faith due to existing grants. But if Biddulph, or such people, wish to discuss the question in the House of Commons merely *ad invidium*, you must see that even if the committee were wholly under the control of government, instead of being most entirely uncontrollable, it would still be impossible to prevent a motion to that effect in the House, which any

member has the means of making, and which a struggle in the Commons, as to moving for the amount, &c., would only provoke.

This is one of the many evils inseparable from the station which we fill in the country, and one of many causes which makes me daily and hourly sigh for the moment when my friends will allow me to think that I have fully discharged (by a life hitherto of incessant labour) every claim that they, or the country can have upon me.

I want one great and essential quality for my station, and every hour increases the difficulty. I can still, and could still, for a few years, as long as my eyesight is spared to me, labour at my desk, but I am not competent to the management of men. I never was so naturally, and toil and anxiety more and more unfit me for it.

This thing is got out of my hands. I know not how I could have kept it in them, though a bolder manager of men undoubtedly might.

If it comes into the House of Commons, it must be met; and I have no doubt that all who are in the government, will do fairly by you in such a case; but I still hope that it may (though not by any exertions of government, for I know none we can make), be kept out of that course of discussion.

Lord Grenville and his brother perceived that no advantage could be gained for their clients, the Roman Catholics, by insisting on bringing forward a measure for their relief. They willingly postponed its consideration; but when an attempt was made to force them to abandon the subject entirely and for ever, they felt that as men as well as ministers, but one course was open to them, and that they adopted, not only without hesitation, but with a sensible gratification. The First Lord of the Admiralty so

little cared for the emoluments or dignity of his office, that when there appeared a hope of strengthening the administration by accepting the services of a talented member of the Opposition, he immediately offered to surrender his post. Of the disinterestedness, indeed disinclination to office, of the First Lord of the Treasury, ample evidence has already been produced; in short, no two public men could have been found who were less ambitious.

MR. T. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Admiralty, March 14, 1807.

My dearest Brother,

Lord Grenville being so hard pressed in point of business, as not to have a moment left for his pen, has desired me to steal from the Admiralty time enough to tell you of the critical situation in which the government finds itself placed. You know as much as I do, of the general intention of the proposed measure for allowing to the Catholics the same benefits in England in point of military rank, which had been given to them by the Irish Act before the Union. At the time that this measure was adopted by us, it was evident that the Irish petition was not likely to be stopped by it, but it was thought very desirable to give the Catholics the benefits of this measure, although it was not very likely, even when given, to stop or to check the violent agitation in Dublin of the Catholic petition. The chief doubt was, how far the King's mind could be prevailed upon to adopt that measure, more especially as we proposed to give some additional extension to the Irish Act; in point of fact, we proposed, by a formal minute of Cabinet submitted to the King, to give to all his subjects, of whatever persuasion, the capacity of serving in his army or navy, with no other exception or condition whatever, than that

of taking an oath of allegiance: these words being calculated to allow Catholics or Dissenters to enjoy the same military and naval rank as Protestants. The King took two days to consider this, and then expressed a very reluctant consent, which he described to be founded upon his considering this measure as realising in England what had before been done in Ireland. But whatever were the motives, the King approved of the measure; and for our better security on this point, the dispatch to the Lord-Lieutenant, empowering him to announce this measure to the Catholics, was likewise previously communicated to the King, and approved of by him. Lord Sidmouth, during all this time, professing his continued hostility to Catholic Emancipation, but acquiescing in the measure proposed, as one to which the government had been pledged by the Irish Act.

So it stood till the measure began to be put into the shape of a Bill, when suddenly it appeared that the King conceived himself to have consented only to a literal renewal of the Irish Bill in England, and took objections to the proposed extension in regard to the Catholics of rank upon the staff, and also to the admission of the Dissenters under the words by which they had been intended to be included; and it appeared that Lord Sidmouth protested likewise that he had meant the same reservation, and that he must directly oppose any word beyond the words of the Irish Act. About the same time, we found that all of Pitt's party, whom we naturally considered as friends to Catholic Emancipation, took now the same ground with that of the King and Lord Sidmouth, and declared themselves ready for the Irish Bill, but not one inch beyond it would they go. In spite of all this, I believe it might have been carried in the House of Commons, but not so in the House of Lords, for on Wednesday last, the King told Lord Grenville that he regretted having given any consent upon the subject, and should certainly think it right to make it known that his sentiments were against the measure. This seems to Lord Grenville to make the success of the Bill

in the House of Lords quite impracticable; Lord Grenville and I, therefore, met on Wednesday evening (the Catholic Bill then standing for Thursday) and in concert with Lord Howick, Lord H. Petty, and Lord Holland) we discussed what was to be done.

My own opinion was, that it was absolutely necessary to come to an immediate decision, either to concede upon the subject of the Bill, or to resign the government. Upon this alternative, which seemed necessarily imposed upon us, I had no hesitation in being the first to declare that I inclined to concession; in the first place, because, as I expected very little benefit in Ireland from the measure, if carried, so I thought there would be little, if anything, to regret on that score if it was lost, although I admit the disappointment will be a new wound, even when the success of the measure would not have been regarded as a benefit. I could not, however, bring my mind to think that the difference between the Irish Bill, and the proposed extension of it, was of magnitude enough to rest upon that difference the extinction of the present government. If it had been thought prudent or fit to agitate the whole Catholic question; and if I had been convinced, which I am not, that we ought to have brought that forward, then most undoubtedly I would not have conceded, but should have thought it a duty to have resigned rather than to have conceded in that contest. But here there is nothing *dignus vindice,* and the country would neither understand nor approve the difference in question as one which could justify the government as being staked upon the issue of that question; and yet no other alternative remained; for by this time, we knew that, even if the Bill was carried, the King was ready to resort to his last powers to prevent its passing into a law. An additional motive with me for concession was, the conviction that Lord Grenville has, that this is *bonâ fide* a conscientious scruple with the King, and that instead of wishing to make this a pretence for breaking up

the government, the King desires nothing so much as the continuance of it, at any price, except that which is now in question.

Further, likewise I considered that our concession is not the revocation of any pledge that we have given, but is perfectly consistent with the opinions we have maintained. We have professed to be friends to Catholic Emancipation, and we have openly said that our only reason for not persisting in bringing it forward, is because we cannot carry the measure, and do not believe the agitation of the question under those circumstances to be anything but hurtful and mischievous. Precisely in the same manner do we act in regard to this concession; we brought the Bill in, believing that we could carry it; we find, and it is notorious to all the world, that we cannot carry it; we concede therefore, on this point precisely on the same grounds on which we have conceded before, not to bring forward Catholic Emancipation. Upon these grounds, the five persons whom I have named, at length agreed to adopt the measure of restraining the Bill to that of the Irish Bill, which, however, they all (except me) thought should include the Navy. Accordingly, we put off the Bill till Thursday; and yesterday morning, Lord Grenville and Lord Howick saw the King to tell him of this change; and Lord Grenville proposed to him that he, Lord Grenville, should make a fresh minute of Cabinet for the King, describing the precise terms of the Bill as restricted to the former Irish Bill. The King acceded to this proposal, on which he is to see Lord Grenville on Wednesday next; but the King still expressed (what I foresaw he would) an entire disinclination to the whole of the Navy, and that of the Dissenters, both of which he considers as exceeding the letter of the Irish Bill.

In this state, I am still of opinion that it would be better to concede, and I think Lord Grenville is himself strongly inclined to think that it would be better to abandon the Bill altogether, than to make vain efforts to botch and to cobble it. We are to have a Cabinet to-night, at which this question is to be discussed,

and deep do I regret that I cannot have the benefit either of your assistance or that of Lord Spencer; but, upon the whole, I am still inclined to press for the total concession of the whole Bill, although I do not know that I shall find the means of persuading Lord Howick, &c., to do so.

In the meantime we are endeavouring to see whether anything can be done to secure Canning to our ranks, if that can be made possible; some strength of that sort is absolutely necessary, for I have not bodily health enough to bear the fatigues of the House with those of office. I heartily wish you were here to help me in all my difficulties, my dearest brother. Lord Grenville and I do not know how to do without you.

Yours ever most affectionately,

T. G.

MR. T. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Monday, March 16, 1807.

My dearest Brother,

In all your letter there is nothing that gives me so much uneasiness as the few lines at the end, by which I see that in this very anxious and embarrassing moment to us all, you should for such strong and natural motives, find it impossible to assist us with your presence and advice upon matters that press too closely to admit of the possibility of hanging over for the delays of correspondence. You think it wrong to have stirred the question at all, and perhaps I do not so far differ from you as to have wished to do so, because I am as much persuaded as you can be, that it will not, if carried, do any good in Ireland, and so I have uniformly thought and spoken of it; but I could have no objection to the measure itself, and it was not easy, with that opinion, to resist those who were eager for it as a measure of encouragement, however insufficient. So far I agree with your first objection, though I think you do not enough feel the

difficulties of our being governed by such objections in conduct.

Upon your second criticism upon our first concession, I continue to think that the difference between the Irish Bill, which the King would grant, and the proposed extension of it, which he would not, was not a sufficient ground for destroying the government; and least of all so under circumstances such as I described to you, where there was some misapprehension and misunderstanding among the members of the Cabinet, and some between the Cabinet and the King. Upon your third topic, we both entirely agree; for as between the cobbling the Bill and the abandoning it, there can be no hesitation in the choice.

Those of us who are friends to Catholic Emancipation met yesterday, viz., Lord Howick, Lord Holland, Lord H. Petty, Lord Moira, Wyndham, Lord Grenville, and myself, and we agreed upon a paper to the King, in which we stated the impossibility of modifying the Bill, and the opinion, that under the present circumstances, it would be better to abandon it. But we protested for the necessity of each of us expressing our sentiments on the Catholic question, if the petition should (against our opinion) be brought forward in parliament. We earnestly expressed our apprehensions for the state of Ireland, and distinctly claimed that, if we continued in government, we should be considered by the King as competent to propose to him, at all times, any measure respecting Ireland, which might appear to us to be necessary or useful to the safety and prosperity of the empire.

Lord Grenville went down to Windsor this morning, and is just returned—the King was civil in his manner, but pretty decisive in his tone upon the subject; he has, however, desired to have till Wednesday to consider of it, unless he can make up his mind by to-morrow morning.

In the meantime, I had written both on Thursday and Friday to Lord Spencer, who, from illness, had been at Althorp, and had told him of the decisions we had made, and of the grounds

on which they were formed. You will judge then of my additional distress, when I find, by a letter from him to-day, that he is to arrive to-morrow in town, with a persuasion that he cannot concur in the measures taken, and cannot continue to hold his office; certainly, if he had been in town, and said so while it was yet time, nothing should have led me to concur in the measure of yesterday; his resignation would induce the Duke of Bedford's, and would destroy all the good, if any there is, of our retaining the government; he must, therefore, either modify his opinion, or we must somehow or other go out with him, for the other I cannot bear. Perhaps, I am inclined to think, the King's answer to-morrow may afford an easy ground for that resignation which, if Lord Spencer resigns, somehow or other I think we must all do. If he stays, and we stay, I agree with you about Lord Sidmouth, and I have offered the Admiralty to Lord Grenville for Canning, which we think he will accept, and which is no sacrifice from me.

EARL TEMPLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Friday.

My dear Father,

I have but one moment left me in which I can write to you. You are aware of what has happened, and that Lord Sidmouth has played his old tricks with the King, in consequence of which the government do not find themselves strong enough to carry the Catholic Army and Navy Bill, which is to be modified, by making the law in England as it stands in Ireland. You may easily conceive my feelings, and I can only guess yours. This is not a point on which Lord Grenville would be justified in breaking up the government, but it is a point on which a stand ought to be made if we have any regard for the character of the government, or the object of Lord Sidmouth. If we give up the Bill, and Lord Sidmouth remains in power, the government is his and not Lord Grenville's; we are disgraced in the eyes of the world, and we

hold our places at Lord Sidmouth's beck. If you feel as I do upon this, for God's sake lose no time in pressing Lord Grenville to make up his mind on a point on which he is now undecided. The numbers he would lose by turning out Lord Sidmouth, would be more than counterbalanced by the numbers who are ready to come to us with Canning, and after what has happened it is impossible that any cordiality can exist between Lord Grenville and Lord Sidmouth. The former can never forgive the latter, and the latter can never forget that he has beat the former.

I cannot say how anxious I feel upon a point on which I know the character and honour of Lord Grenville's future government will depend. I rather fear that some of Fox's friends press Lord Grenville to a contrary course to that which I think the circumstances absolutely require, which makes me eager that any advice you give, should be given without a moment's loss of time. How I do regret your absence.

Ever dutifully and affectionately yours,

C. T.

EARL TEMPLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Six o'Clock.

My dear Father,

I have only one moment to say that Lord Grenville has (as I have heard from others,) been to Windsor to-day, with the resolution of Cabinet to concede the whole Bill, but expressive of their adherence to the principles of indulgence, &c. The impression brought back is that the King will not be satisfied with this concession, in which case the government is to break up. This is to be decided to-morrow. The postman is come, and I have only time to say that Lord Spencer is not come up, and does not arrive till to-morrow. From what he has written, however, they seem to think he does not agree with them entirely

in all that has been done. I have neither seen nor heard from Lord Grenville.

Ever dutifully and affectionately yours.

C. T.

MR. T. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

March 17, 1807.

My dearest Brother,

I have just seen the King's answer which is precisely what I expected it to be, an expression of satisfaction at our abandoning the Bill in parliament, but an open avowal that nothing can relieve his mind, but our withdrawing those expressions from our last paper which point at future measures connected with the subject of concessions to the Catholics, on which subject he is determined never to change the resolution that he has made; and that he cannot ever agree to any concessions to the Catholics, and his mind cannot be at ease unless he shall receive a positive assurance from his confidential servants which shall effectually relieve him from all further apprehension.

This as you see admits of no further doubt, and no one of us entertains any; we are therefore to meet to-night only to draw up the papers, in which we are to express to-morrow our determination to resign our employments.

Upon the whole I am satisfied that we are now upon the best ground, both for ourselves and for the public; though God knows what is to become of Ireland and of this country.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Downing Street, March 17, 1807.

My dearest Brother,

Although I trust that my brother will write to you to-day, and I have certainly not much time for doing so, I cannot bear that you should hear from another, even from him, and not from

me, that the King's answer is such as to leave to us no option. Before long, I trust we shall meet, and that I shall then have the opportunity of showing you all the papers that have passed. In the meantime, I believe you already know the substance.

We had expressed a readiness to let the present Bill drop; but we had reserved the necessity, in doing so, of stating our sentiments on the subject, especially to the public and parliament. And we had protested against being bound by this concession to refrain from submitting from time to time for his decision, such measures as the course of circumstances in Ireland (the state of which country we look at with anxiety and apprehension) might appear to us to require.

His answer this morning plainly expresses that we cannot continue in his service unless we withdraw that reservation, and engage never to propose to him (whatever be the occasion) any measures connected with that subject.

We have heard much on this Catholic question of his coronation oath. He appears to have forgot that our oath, as Privy Councillors, as well as our manifest duty, obliges us to give him true counsel to the best of our judgment. How is this oath and duty to be fulfilled, if on the affairs of that part of his kingdom, which is exposed to the greatest danger, both within and without, we bind ourselves by a previous promise not to give him (whatever be the exigency of the peril) such advice as in our judgment is best calculated to meet the evil; nay, not even to bring forward any advice on any subject connected with it.

You have thought that we had already gone too far in concession. Perhaps it is so; but you know the motives. It seems to me that the matter is now placed on the strongest grounds for us that could have been found. We contracted no such engagement when the government was formed—none such was proposed—and if it had been proposed, I am very sure we should not have acceded to it.

How can it then be required of us to take it now? I have no time to write more, but I shall have much to say about future lines of conduct, &c.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Downing Street, March 18, 1807.

My dearest Brother,

We have seen the King to-day, and although he has nominally taken time to consider, he has in fact expressed to us his determination to form, or try to form, another government.

The general opinion is that the Duke of Portland is to come here, with Percival, who, in that case, will of course be the real minister.

I showed your son to-day the minutes that have brought this thing to a point. When there is time to copy them, I will send them to you, and I trust you will approve.

It is very doubtful whether we ought to have conceded so far as we have. But, in the state to which the business is now brought, it is very satisfactory to have erred, if at all, on that side.

MR. T. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Admiralty, March 18, 1807.

My dearest Brother,

I have just received your letter of yesterday. You will have perceived by my account to you of the King's answer, that we were required to withdraw our former declaration, and to relieve his mind from all apprehension of our ever pressing upon him any advice or measures connected with concessions to the Catholics. In this state I perfectly agree with you, that we must make every effort possible to assert our own ground, without coming to any direct resignation, but leaving him to decide upon the steps which he may think proper to take for removing us.

The answer, therefore, which we sent last night, was framed in this view. We respectfully, but positively declared to him that we could not withdraw any of our declarations contained in our last communication to him; nor could we, as sworn counsellors to the King, forbear to offer to him any advice whatever, that might at any time appear to us to be important to the prosperity or security of any part of the empire.

We have done our duty in asserting our opinions of the obligations imposed upon us as counsellors to the King, and in declaring to him our intentions of fulfilling those obligations as long as we continue to be so. How long he will leave us in that state, I shall know at the levee this morning; and if I get home from the Recorder's Report time enough, I will add a line to tell you of what has passed at Buckingham House. I conclude that he has determined upon a change; but I agree with you it is his business to make it, and not ours.

Your ever affectionate and dearest brother,

T. G.

P.S. I am just returned from the levee. I did not go into the closet; but the King's language to Lord Grenville was first to ask whether the paper given in was quite final from the members of the Cabinet, and then to say (upon Lord Grenville's answering in the affirmative) that he must have time to look about him, for that he was so little prepared for this, that he had seen nobody and made no arrangement. This, with frequent protestations of his having no wish to change his government, but of his being governed by conscientious principles alone, made the tone of his conversation to Lord Grenville, Lord Howick, and Lord Spencer; so that I consider the King as now occupied in framing a new government, which he will probably announce to his present Ministers as soon as it is made, and that must be considered as our dismission whenever it happens. It is said that he has not seen the Duke of Port-

land, but has had frequent communication with him by letter. It seems expected that the Duke will take the Treasury, and Perceval the Exchequer, with Castlereagh, Canning, and Hawkesbury the three seals; but this is all conjecture.

EARL TEMPLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Monday.

I took it for granted, my dear father, that my uncles gave you regular information of what was going on. Nothing is yet decided, and though I have no doubt that ultimately the new administration will be formed, I yet believe that they experience difficulties in the formation which they did not expect. The Duke of Portland has accepted the Treasury, but I am told is still undecided. Perceval, I have reason to believe, at this moment, only looks to be Attorney-General again, and declines any responsible situation. They say Lord Melville is not to come in, but that his son is to be President of the Board of Control. The Exchequer Seals are, like every other situation, undetermined upon; Perceval and Castlereagh have been both talked of, but to-day it is confidently rumoured that Rose is to have them. I trust in God that it is so. Lord Hardwicke went of his own accord, unsent for, to remonstrate against the steps which the King has taken, and to tell him that he could not answer for the safety of Ireland, if he persisted in demanding of the Ministers the pledge. The King bowed him out of the room, complimenting him ironically upon his independence, and upon his belonging to no party, and telling him that he could not depart from the resolution he had taken, to insist upon the pledge.

Charles Yorke has refused office, and has left town. Lord Howick wrote to the King yesterday, to tell him he should, with his Majesty's permission, tell the House of Commons to-day that his Majesty was forming his administration. The King's

answer, received this morning, was, that "what Lord Howick proposed mentioning in the House of Commons was correctly the point, viz., that in consequence of what had passed on Wednesday last, the King had sent for persons not in the number of his present Ministers. But Lord Howick must be aware that the arrangements must take some days yet."

Upon this half permission, I believe Lord Howick means to-day to make a communication to the House, which is anxiously waiting for it, in order to take its tone immediately. The cry is strongly with us, but I am sorry to say that Lord Grenville throws cold water upon any proposal for vigorous measures in Opposition, and has began to disgust Lord Howick and his friends by his coldness upon the subject. For God's sake press your advice strongly upon him, and do not let him again throw away the game in his hands. The country gentlemen and the saints are now with us, and if pledged now, will continue so; but if Easter is suffered to intervene, their anger will cool. Lord Grenville always carries in his mind that Fox hurt himself, in 1784, by persevering in vexatious questions after he was out. That is true; but it is no reason why no question at all should be agitated.

Ever dutifully and affectionately yours.

Accounts from Trowbridge. The 'Maria,' Dutch frigate, laden with spice; 'Pallas,' ditto, ditto, taken—the first by Captain Raimer, after a short action; the second by the 'Greyhound' and 'Harrier.'

MR. T. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Thursday, March 19, 1807.

I hear nothing of any sort except a report that Lord Eldon is gone down to Windsor to-day. The general language of Op-

position is to affect to be sorry for this state of things; such at least is the language of Rose, Long, and Canning. We continue to say without reserve that we do not resign, and the more our case is known, the more impression it seems to make; but I have no certain intelligence.

Yours affectionately,

T. G.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Downing Street, March 26, 1807.

My dearest Brother,

Here I am once more free, and from what you have long known of my undisguised sentiments on the subject, you will easily conclude I am not sorry to be so.

The new administration has not commenced its career under very favourable circumstances; their best hope is in the too eager disposition of some of our friends, who are, I fear, a little disposed to mar our game, as Fox's was so often marred, by running on too fast. When I say our game, the folly of the expression stares me in the face; for why should I feel myself included in a struggle, the success of which is to put my fetters upon me again, which when on I felt so galling?

What is due to my own character, and to the course I have held in this transaction I must do, and not suffer either to be prejudiced by whispers and lies, as was the case in 1801.

Something is also due to the country, and to the peace and safety of Ireland, and in that I trust I shall not be wanting. The rest is for younger men, and my only care must be, not to be included by implication in anything which I do not fully know, and previously approve.

News, I have none. The Admiralty is, as you will see, not yet settled; and the report of the day is that Mulgrave is to have

it. It had been destined for Canning if Wellesley had taken the Foreign Seals.

Yours most affectionately,

G.

Lord Stafford is to give notice to-day of a motion for this day fortnight. When this is over, I shall be anxious to run down to you.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Downing Street, March 27, 1807.

My dearest Brother,

The deed is done, and I am again a free man, and to you I may express what it would seem like affectation to say to others, the infinite pleasure I derive from my emancipation.

The state of my thermometer as to opposition, is, as you know, regulated by considerations originating in the whole habits and course of my life, in the natural temper of my mind, and in my opinions both religious and political. And yet, I have found, and shall doubtless again find, that it is not an easy matter in practice to reconcile that forbearance and moderation which these opinions inculcate on my mind, with the active discharge of those duties which belong to a public man in this country, and in times like the present. Only let me remind you that the error of doing too much is far more dangerous than that of doing too little; and let it also be remembered, that if my friends and near connexions should feel themselves bound to go much beyond my line, that very circumstance will impose on me the necessity of keeping still more within it, than I should otherwise do.

I have now a favour to ask of you, in the success of which I am very much interested. The general opinion is, that the whole hope of the present set of men rests on a plan of tiding over the present Session, and then sending the House of Commons to a fresh election.

Among others, whom such an event would probably deprive of their present seats, is Wickham, from whom I have derived such aid as will ever attach me to his interests in the strongest manner. It would be the highest gratification to me if in your arrangements for a new parliament, he could be included.

Ever most affectionately yours.

G.

Some writers have ventured to censure Lord Grenville for allowing his government to be broken up on the question of Catholic Emancipation, which, according to their representation, was unnecessarily brought forward, and injudiciously pressed upon the King. In answer, it is only necessary to say, that Lord Grenville had nothing to do with the presentment of the subject; indeed would gladly have deferred discussion to a more favourable opportunity. It was pressed upon the government by the attitude of the Catholics in Dublin, and the former could neither ignore its existence, nor dispose of it satisfactorily by force or representation.

When Lord Grenville advocated the Slave Trade Abolition Bill on the 3rd of February, at the second reading he was interrupted in the middle of an eloquent exposition of the horrors of slavery by Lord Morton, who directed the attention of the House to a person taking notes, which was not at this time permitted; the reporter was promptly obliged to discontinue his labours, and the speaker proceeded with his discourse. He was followed by the Duke of Clarence, who declared the bill unne-

cessary, and eulogised the conduct of the West Indian planters. His Royal Highness spoke the sentiments of all the Royal Family, except the Duke of Gloucester, who supported the Bill with arguments similar to those of Lord Grenville. Lord Sidmouth was the advocate of the Court. Notwithstanding all that could be urged against it by the Opposition, the second reading was carried by a majority of 100 to 86. The debate was renewed again and again with great spirit; and on the 10th, the third reading was passed without a discussion. On the same day, Lord Howick moved the first reading in the Commons; after much debating, a division took place on the 23rd—for the Bill 283, against it 16. With such a majority, Opposition, though numbering in its ranks Lord Castlereagh, and other able men, had no chance. The third reading passed without a division on the 16th of March, and the royal assent was given on the 25th of the same month. This grand measure may, therefore, be said to have been the last official act of the government, for on the same day the principal appointments of the new Ministry were gazetted.

If the Grenville administration had done nothing but effect the abolition of slavery in the British dominions, it had done sufficient to entitle it to the applause of free nations, and the admiration of their country for all time to come. It may, without exaggeration be stated, that no government ever earned for themselves a more honourable reputation, nor ever conferred on society a greater boon;

nor was it by any means an object of easy accomplishment—the mercantile community being stoutly opposed to it, the King and the Court resisting its progress with equal energy, and the higher and middling classes—of which a large and influential portion was connected with the colonial interest—regarding it as an attack upon the source of their wealth and consequence. In short, the Opposition was so formidable and comprehensive, that Pitt, when, in 1804, the extraordinary exertions of Wilberforce in behalf of an Abolition Bill were defeated by a large majority in the House of Lords, and in the following year were equally fruitless in the Commons, considered that the decision of the country had been pronounced, and was not inclined for further agitation. "Indeed, he had not the enthusiasm for right and justice," acknowledges a shrewd observer of political character, "to risk in their behalf losing the friendship of the mammon of unrighteousness; and he left to his rivals, when they became his successors, the glory of that triumph in the sacred cause of humanity, which should have illustrated his name, who in its defence had raised all the strains of his eloquence to their very highest pitch."*

Such enthusiasm for right and justice Lord Grenville possessed in an eminent degree; this powerful impulse enabled him to surmount every obstacle, and it became evident that the mammon of unrighteousness had at last found not only no regard, but a manly and virtuous contempt.

* Lord Brougham's "Eminent Statesmen of the Time of George III."

Mr. Thomas Grenville in the Admiralty, appears to have been as able and enterprising as Lord Grenville in the Treasury. According to evidence given under his own hand, it was no fault of his that some of the naval expeditions were imperfect successes or signal failures. Had the commanders fulfilled their instructions, there is every reason to believe that more favourable results would have been produced. Unfortunately, officers were entrusted with the direction of most important enterprises, for which they had not the proper capacity. He did not appoint them, and therefore was not responsible for their mistakes; nor did he approve of the majority of the expeditions upon which they were sent.

Of these distant enterprises, the one that reflected most credit on the commander, was the capture of the important island of Curaçoa at the commencement of the present year, by a naval force under Captain Brisbane, consisting of the 'Arethusa,' 'Anson,' 'Latour,' and 'Fisguard' frigates. They attacked forts Amsterdam and République, mounting a great number of guns, defended by several vessels of war, and a chain of forts, all of which surrendered. The casualties amounted to three seamen killed and fourteen wounded. Minor naval successes, however, were almost too numerous to count: Lord Cochrane and Sir Sidney Smith were in full activity cutting out vessels, and dashing at fortified ports; and the squadron of Admiral Dacres on the West India station captured forty-eight French and Spanish ships in one year.

The names of the new Ministry were gazetted during the last week in March, and the first in April, and were thus arranged:

DUKE OF PORTLAND, First Lord of the Treasury.
MR. PERCEVAL, { Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Under Treasurer.
LORD HAWKESBURY, Home Secretary.
VISCOUNT CASTLEREAGH AND MR. CANNING, { Secretaries for the Colonies and War. Foreign Secretary.
EARL CAMDEN, President of the Council.
EARL BATHURST, Board of Trade.
MR. DUNDAS, President of the Board of Control.
MR. G. ROSE, Treasurer of the Navy.
EARL OF WESTMORELAND, Keeper of the Privy Seal.
MARQUIS OF TITCHFIELD, MR. PERCEVAL, MR. STURGES BOURNE, AND MR. ELIOT, { Junior Lords of the Treasury.
EARL OF CHATHAM, Master-General of the Ordnance.
SIR JAMES PULTENEY, BART., Secretary at War.
LORD ELDON, Lord Chancellor.
DUKE OF MONTROSE, Master of the Horse.
LORD MULGRAVE, First Lord of the Admiralty.
DUKE OF RICHMOND, Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland.
SIR ARTHUR WELLESLEY, Chief Secretary.
LORD MANNERS, Lord Chancellor.
MR. FOSTER, Chancellor of the Exchequer.

The following reports are from Mr. W. H. and Capt.

T. F. Fremantle, and include their views of the position of their successful rivals.

MR. W. H. FREMANTLE, M.P., TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Englefield Green, April 3, 1807.

My dear Lord,

I have wished to be quiet, and to have myself released from all Treasury concerns before I wrote to you—thank God! I think I am now fairly out of the harness, and I wish Wellesley joy of the situation he has undertaken. If he has the enjoyment of a dissolution, (which in my opinion must take place,) it will add no little share to the comforts of his office. They are moving heaven and earth for Thursday, and there is no threat, no promise, and no personal exertion, from the highest to the lowest, but what is exercised upon the occasion. I think we shall beat them, but still they will acquire a great number. The principle upon which the parliament was arranged is favourable to their views, for by not advancing one shilling of public money to any individual to assist him in his election, we had nothing to depend upon but the opinion and promise of the person nominated to us. The present government are aware of these terms, and you will see in all their papers, the threat of a dissolution held out; I have no doubt of its having the proper effect upon many of them. One of the things which has hurt me most in this whole business, is the conduct of Lord Wellesley—I am really quite vexed when it comes across me; it disgusts one with mankind. You may easily imagine that this unexpected change of affairs has been a cruel and most unhappy break up to the society and intercourse, and domestic enjoyment of my family. I lament it most seriously, because it is felt by them, and the scene of this neighbourhood is more violent

and unpleasant than you can imagine. Nothing, however, can exceed the civility, the personal kindness, and the marked liberality of their conduct towards me. It, of course, harrasses my mind extremely, but, knowing and feeling that I am right, nothing will alter my line of conduct.

The distinction which is drawn between Lord Grenville and the rest of our friends, is published with the greatest industry, and there is no means they do not grasp at to explain these sentiments to those who are connected with the Grenvilles, and who can have an opportunity of repeating and making them known. I think two or three of their appointments are the most unfortunate for the country that could be—I mean the Duke of Portland, Lord Mulgrave, and Sir J. Pulteney. The army given up *in toto* to the Duke of York, the navy upon which all Europe depends, guided and disposed of by *****, and the patronage of the country at the mercy of one of the most profligate and rapacious jobbers that ever existed. I have the comfort of reflecting, that whenever the question may arise of Lord Grenville's administration of the Treasury, it will afford to the public the strongest and most incontestible proof of his integrity, and of his value (to the interests of this country) in a public and great responsible situation. I am very glad to find that there is not as yet the semblance of any addresses on the subject of the change of government. I know they have been moving everything to procure them, and it will be a very strong testimony of the opinion of the country in favour of the last government. Notwithstanding all this, and that the new government have not the confidence and opinion of the public, yet I foresee that some of the present opposition will plunge into all sorts of violence which will alarm the country, and that the government will be maintained in order to preserve tranquillity and peace; and if very great care is not taken, it will turn upon the individual support of the King, which must and always will prevail in the country. The Prince I hear is worse, and I think

he cannot last long. The whole kingdom, in my opinion, looks to Lord Grenville, and I am persuaded he must come in again, but never as long as the King lives, with all the same people who composed the last government. I shall be in town on Monday morning. I have done everything in my power to procure a strong attendance on Thursday, and I shall be grievously disappointed if we don't beat them.

Ever, with the most sincere affection and gratitude,

Yours most faithfully.

W. H. FREEMANTLE.

CAPTAIN THOMAS FREMANTLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Admiralty, April 4.

MY LORD,

I avail myself of your Lordship's permission to write as usual, which I had fully intended to have done even before, whenever we were regularly superseded. The patent cannot be out before Wednesday.

Lord Mulgrave, Gambier, Bickerton, W. Hope, Palmerston, Buller, Ward, [Lords of the Admiralty].

There are rumours afloat of the Russians having made peace. The commercial treaty has not taken place, and I am told the Russian merchants at Petersburg are very much dissatisfied with Lord Douglas, who had the imprudence to present a private memorial from them to his Lordship, immediately to the Emperor. Some of the people with Lord Hutchinson write that peace is probable between the Russians and French. Old St. Vincent has absolutely resigned, and sent his secretary with all his papers, to make them over to Sir J. T. Saumarez. It is supposed Gardner will take the command; Keith is looking to it, and Young to succeed him (Keith.) Sir Charles Cotton refused to go to the Admiralty. Barrow

succeeds Tucker, and Buller is, I conclude, to counteract us at Saltash by secret influence. It is said very many are gone over, who voted on the question of the Duchy of Lancaster. The agents of the Ministers are certainly very active.

We have wound up all our accounts, and as you may well imagine, I am most satisfied with Mr. Grenville's kindness, as well as the confidence he has reposed in me; indeed, the whole board are completely attached to him, and Neale does not hesitate saying, that it is to the confidence he has in him, that he is induced to take the line he does. I hope the new board will not relax in the discipline of the navy. They are steady men, but I doubt whether there is sufficient decision or energy in their characters, to constitute an efficient board—they certainly will not enjoy a bed of roses.

Ever faithfully,
T. F. F.

CAPTAIN THOMAS FREMANTLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

April 14, 3 p.m.

Mr. Grenville is rather better to-day, but cannot attend the House of Commons. I am just returned from the meeting of all the opposition members at Lord Howick's; the following are nearly the words of the motion intended to be proposed this day.

"That a firm, efficient, and extended administration is essentially necessary at this important crisis, and that the Commons see, with regret, the change that has taken place in his Majesty's councils."

Lord Cochrane has got an acting captain. Lord Gardner has accepted the command of the Channel fleet. The city, you will perceive, have carried their address in the proportion of near three to one.

I confess I think the cry in town against us, and this Popery

cry is still industriously circulated. Lord Keith, you will observe, did not vote in the Lords. I hear the Admiralty are going to reduce the command in the North Sea; consequently he will, in that case, I conclude, succeed. I was too late in the House yesterday, and am again a defaulter. I shall take care to be down in time to-day.

Ever faithfully,
T. F. F.

CAPTAIN THOMAS FREMANTLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Admiralty, April 20.

Nothing particular is in circulation to-day. I have read a letter from Lord Mulgrave to Mr. Grenville, wherein he states he does not mean to interfere with any appointment to the 'William and Mary,' and that he will take Mr. Grenville's recommendation for the appointments to the Admiralty Court at St. Lucia, which of right ought to have taken place whilst we were in office. This will afford Mr. Grenville the means of providing for his private secretary and Granville Proby.

The Princess of Wales is said to have expressed herself on the last drawing-room day; that if she had appeared there, there would have been Lord Melville, who had been tried and acquitted; there would have been Sir Home Popham, who had been tried and severely reprimanded; and there would have been "poor me," herself, "who have been *neither tried or acquitted.*"

I hear Bickerton is already dissatisfied with his situation, and I think eventually Lord Mulgrave will be obliged to get rid of his private secretary, who must, in my opinion have led him into the error of writing such a letter to Mr. Grenville. All over London yesterday it was reported, and by many believed, that Lord Grenville was to take office with the present people; whether this story is conveyed by the government themselves,

on is a proof how unable they are to go on as they are constituted, your Lordship will be the best judge. They have given counter orders to assembling a squadron at Yarmouth for the Baltic, but have directed Lord Keith to send a frigate and two sloops to protect the trade—I conclude they will go off Dantzic, which is already besieged.

I am afraid Duckworth has, like my old friend Sir Hyde, failed, and from the same cause—our sailors do not make good negotiators.

Ever faithfully,

T. F. F.

The policy of the new government began to loom in the distance almost as soon as they found themselves in their places. To the opposition that would be arrayed against them, they confessed their inferiority by the measures they took to obtain an accession of strength. It was necessary to stigmatize the enlightened statesmen who had just made the greatest possible sacrifice at the altar of patriotism, and it was equally imperative to represent the men who had been permitted to supersede them, as the only conservatives of the religion and loyalty of the country. Boundless powers of misrepresentation drove back the popular intelligence from the position it had achieved under the auspices of the administration that had carried the Abolition of the Slave Trade. The manner in which this retrograde movement was effected appears in the following correspondence.

MR. T. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM

April 1, 1807.

MY DEAREST BROTHER,

I am still lingering here in hourly expectation of my release, although I yet know of none of the new commission, except Admiral Gambier, Bickerton and Ward. I thought it due to our naval exertions to bring them to a point before I went out; I have, therefore, this day ordered 'Goliah,' 'Vanguard,' 'Maida,' 'Brunswick,' 'Minotaur,' 'Orion,' 'Namur,' 'Agamemnon,' 'Ruby,' 'Hindostan,' 'Malabar,' and 'Superb,' (Keats being hourly expected) to assemble at Yarmouth, and to be joined there by 'Hercule,' 'Leyden,' 'Inflexible,' 'St. Albans,' as soon as the last four are ready; Keats to take them under his command as they shall arrive, and to put himself under the orders of Duckworth, as soon as he comes. This shows, at least, our means and disposition; the twelve are ready, and the other four will be so very shortly. There is not an enemy's ship at sea, and I may boast of having taken proper steps for an immediate supply of stores, of hemp, &c., for three years; and I have added 300 artificers to the dockyards, so that my account is reputably closed.

Fremantle will have told you that I have also the credit of being single in abstaining from making promotions for rank at the change of the Board. I shall now breathe freely once again.

The government goes on slowly; they make Lord Melville a Privy Councillor to-day; and they mean to move for rescinding the resolutions in the House of Commons; it would have been more decent to have begun with that step first.

I suspect Lord Sidmouth's friends are much employed in negotiations for joining the present government; and I believe all Canning's objections will give way to obtain this accession of strength.

What I hear of the public voice is strongly with us on the subject of the pledge, and full of apprehension of the weakness of the new ministers; but they are working hard to inflame the public mind on the Catholic question; and most certainly there is an eager spirit of bigotry, which they will find at hand to help them, if they are really wicked enough to challenge in England and Ireland all the horrors of religious divisions and animosities. This is very frightful.

MR. T. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

April 4, 1807.

MY DEAREST BROTHER,

Many thanks for your offer of house-room; I live in hopes of another house being found for my tenant, Mr. Taylor, who is disposed to give me all practicable accommodation, by quitting immediately, if he can place himself anywhere else. I suppose that I must take the rest of this month to look about me, before I give possession to Lord Mulgrave, whose Board is now fixed for Monday or Tuesday next: viz., Gambier, Bickerton, Hope, Lord Palmerston, Buller, Ward; they have very shabbily and scurvily intercepted the order from Council for a Court of Admiralty at St. Lucia, which would have enabled me to give a good thing to Granville Proby, and to Golding, and which has been stopped at the Council for the mere purpose of defeating my appointing to the Judge Registrar and Marshal; so that while I remain here for their convenience, they are, as much as they can, intercepting the usual and ordinary course of the Admiralty appointments.

Lord Grenville has certainly some apprehensions of an over eagerness hurrying on some of our friends too fast for him, and for his share of the events of 1784, but he is nevertheless observed to have spoken with much more eagerness, and much less management to the Lords, than Lord Howick thought it necessary to adopt in the House of Commons; he has likewise

been writing very pressing letters from Dropmore for attendance, and he yesterday sent us up a list of one hundred and one peers, upon which I think we may without exaggeration very fairly count; and Tierney's list of Commons is said to be two hundred and forty sure, while the enemy are reckoned at no more, in the utmost, than one hundred and fifty. I cannot, however, help believing that they will be found stronger in number than this calculation supposes, for all possible means are taken to inflame the public mind with the cry of Church and King, and I cannot but apprehend that to men who are bold and desperate enough to have recourse to these frantic measures, something will be supplied out of the bad passions and bigotted prejudices to which Perceval has condescended to appeal. Lord Melville had received a summons from Fawkener, and made an excuse of illness, although he was said to have been ready-dressed for court, and you may depend upon it, that the King and Ministry are very intent on rescinding the Commons' resolution against him.

LORD BRAYBROOK TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

April 10, 1807.

Dear Lord Buckingham,

I fear that things are very bad at Englefield Green, notwithstanding the favourable bulletin I sent you yesterday.

Bob Williams quitted the House of Commons last night at twelve o'clock, the account of poor Bulkeley being then so bad, that it was feared he could not be alive by the time of Sir Robert's return.

His night was not bad, but every hour brings a worse account. Farquhar did not come to town to-day, and Vaughan went from his house about three.

I am quite in despair, and feel in common with you, and his numerous friends, a most real concern for a loss which

I fear is too much to be expected, and cannot easily be replaced.

You will have more faithful accounts of your debate and division in the House of Commons last night and this morning. The numbers were expected to be in favour of your late government; but Rose's Ratsbane is now powerful according to his experience. Brand, 226; government, 258; majority, 32. One of the Thorntons voted with government.

I hear Lord Percy divided in the minority. That Blackburn did the same and Stanley. That the Prince's people staid away, that Wilberforce was absent, and most of your saints. One of the Thorntons voted with government. That all the Doctor's squad except Vansittart, were in the majority, and that C. Wyndham and Marsham both were with government. Lord Egremont is violent for government, and actually sate out the whole debate. Lord Grosvenor is right, but old Romney quite wrong.

I hear no more.

Believe me,

Yours most affectionately,

BRAYBROOK.

P.S. The Glynnes are come to town very well. Thornbrough laments the loss of an Ordnance transport which came out under convoy of the 'Spartan' frigate, and parted from her in a gale of wind. By some mistake, she ran on shore on Botta Beach. T. says, they were fortunate enough to see her on shore, and sent the 'Beagle' sloop down to the beach, which drove the Spanish soldiery away, so that the boats burnt the transport. She had from twenty-five to forty thousand stand of arms, and many other valuable stores—a heavy loss to the English. Our last dispatch vessel to England is likewise taken and carried into Vigo.

MR. T. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Admiralty, April 13, 1807.

MY DEAREST BROTHER,

I can now so little bear to fight the fight of the House of Commons, that I am still confined at home, ever since the late debate of Thursday night; and do not yet feel clear enough of cough and infirmity to have much hope of being able to attend on Wednesday. I shall the more regret this, because the earnest entreaties of Whitbread prevailed upon me to let him speak, when I was up; and I soon afterwards grew so fatigued, that I was obliged to go to bed speechless. Most certainly I do agree with you, that the violences which are offered upon the present occasion, both to parliament and to the old acknowledged principles of the constitution, exceed all that I could have believed would have been tolerated; but as they have determined to adopt the wicked principle of forming a government upon the inflammatory cry of Church and King, at the risk and peril of all the horrors that may arise out of such an appeal, I know not what consideration, sacred or profane, would turn them aside from their present course.

If my thirty years of public life were beginning instead of ending, I should think myself challenged by every principle of public duty, to let not a day pass without speaking plainly and directly all that I think of the proceedings of these times; but, in truth, I find myself quite unable to do so, for I have not bodily strength to bear the House of Commons; and every day that I now go into it is inevitably followed by more or less of malady; so that I feel I must renounce my attendance there.

There are, however, more than enough to do their duty by the public, if they will hang together; and I do not see any reason to apprehend (with Lord Grey's life continued) that our

numbers can be less than 200, at the lowest. The talk of the new Ministry is of invitation to Lord Grenville in the most fulsome style of panegyric; while, at the same time, they are hunting him down with every degree of virulence in their papers, and in all their party proceedings. I hope he will speak out on this subject, and I am glad to see that he is not insensible to the manner in which he has been used by his old friends.

I shall probably give Lord Mulgrave his house by the end of this month, but am still uncertain as to my own hopes of getting home being realised. I find in you a home always.

Sir G. Shee just now sends me word that he has reason to believe the report of the destruction of Constantinople by Duckworth.

MR. W. H. FREMANTLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Stanhope Street, April 15, 1807.

My dear Lord,

I take it for granted Lord Temple will have written to you, and have informed you of everything that has passed in parliament. I think you will agree with me, that altogether our divisions have been very good; with respect to the House of Commons, it was within four of what we calculated, which was two hundred and fifty, and with the pairs and those that were obliged to go away, we mustered two hundred and forty-five. I own I did not think they would have brought quite so many, but there was no exertion and promise, and no threat they did not use. I have no doubt we shall divide two hundred to-night. Those who have as good a knowledge of the House as I have, think we shall divide more, but I shall be surprised if we do; at any rate, I think we shall be able to retain two hundred, and with such a minority, the government cannot go on; indeed,

it is universally understood that they mean to dissolve in the autumn.

You can have no conception of anything half so bad as these exhibitions in the House of Lords; Lords Mulgrave, Westmoreland, and Camden, attempting to put themselves forward as great ministers; the Duke of Portland shrinking from the attacks made upon him. I think that Perceval seems to want nerves; he has not yet attempted that sort of boldness and decision which was the feature of his former speeches, but he hesitates and stammers, and certainly as yet, is quite different in his manner.

Nothing can be more disagreeable than the applications which are made to me on the subject of the parliament. Having nominated so many persons, they of course are dreading the loss of their money, and for which, of course, I can give them no redress. In general, they have stood very stoutly, and I can only except a very few, who have ratted. In fact, the changing opinions is of no avail, as the difference of a few votes, more or less, cannot now alter the determination of government, whatever it may be, on the subject of a dissolution. We had a very full meeting at Lord Howick's this morning, I should think one hundred and fifty persons: none of the Doctor's friends. You shall have an account of the division to-night. Bulkeley is better, but certainly not to be said out of danger; he is relieved by laudanum.

Ever, with great affection,

W. H. FREMANTLE.

MR. T. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Admiralty, April 20, 1807.

MY DEAREST BROTHER,

If I am to believe the reports that I hear, the numbers which the new Ministry have produced in their late divisions, are not likely to change their original intention of dissolving the present

parliament, and Lord Grenville is persuaded that they are entirely occupied with this project, and that the dissolution will certainly take place in a fortnight or three weeks. Our friends are, therefore, beginning to consult together, and to take measures accordingly, without loss of time.

There is an idea of endeavouring to make a stock-purse upon this occasion; but although it may be desirable, and I think is so, to communicate with some of our grandees upon that subject, I should be most decidedly against any minor subscriptions, as I know that in a great many instances, such a course would produce subsequent claims that it would be very inconvenient to entertain, and utterly impossible to satisfy. In the meantime, you have nothing to fear of over-tenderness in the quarter to which you allude. The conduct of the present government in endeavouring to vilify and to decry, by these false and wicked alarms, the very persons whom, at times, they affect to invite to co-operation with them, is too disgusting and wicked to be attended with any degree of success in point of invitation; and if you read the debates, you will easily perceive that the discussion on our side in the House of Lords is pursued by our friends there with more warmth and eagerness than has hitherto reached the House of Commons.

The bad passions and nonsense of those who blindly follow any popular cry, have been, however, excited with some success; and I am strongly of opinion that our most advantageous course at present will be to abstain from urging any more questions similar to those we have already tried. Let this popular effervescence boil away, and let us wait upon the measures of the new government only; and if I do not much deceive myself, they will give ample scope to us for debate, on topics which can no longer be referred to Church or King.

Large subsidies are said to be in question, and of course they must produce new taxes to supply that new expenditure. The repeal of the limited service will impose upon them the necessity

of a new military plan; and the inquiries of the Finance Committee have found in Steele, and are expected to find in Huskisson, ample matter to excite the curiosity and the discussion of the public. These are the topics which will substantially tell against the new Ministers; and when it is recollected that even a dissolution will leave us one hundred peers and nearly two hundred commoners to urge these topics, I still think the bed of roses will be found neither so sweet nor so soft as to suit the delicate sensibilities of Lord Castlereagh and of his colleagues. For myself, I am glad to tell you that I am actually well, but still I cannot conceal from myself that I have no longer strength to sustain the attendance of the House of Commons.

I am grievously disappointed at the last accounts from Vienna, which are dated 4th April, and which distinctly state, that after twelve days of negotiation, Duckworth, on the 4th of March, repassed the Dardanelles and went to Tenedos. There is a bare chance that this account may be exaggerated, as it can have reached Vienna only from a French or from a Turkish historian; but I think they would not falsify the fact; and if it be true, it is difficult to account for it, or to justify it. Duckworth's business and his orders plainly directed him to insist upon the surrender of the Turkish fleet, or to burn it, and to bombard the town. Why he has done neither, and has retired to give them time to make this enterprise impossible, I cannot guess; but am mortified at being disappointed of a triumph which I had thought was as certain as the sailing of the expedition.

My answer to Lord Mulgrave has produced a very courteous reply, and Fremantle will keep his yacht. Many thanks for the Exchequer supply, which was very acceptable.

MR. T. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Tuesday, April 25, 1807.

I have just time to tell you that I have a letter from Murray

of 26th March, from Table Bay; he had received the counter orders by the 'Fly,' and he meant to sail with Crawfurd's troops for Monte Video, on the 10th April, or possibly sooner. The 'Theseus' is come home; so is Duckworth in the 'Royal George.' Canning is ill in bed with a bad cold, and they are all out of humour at their failure in the elections.

Shipley is two ahead of Glynne, and expects to carry it.

I have seen Glynne's hand-bills. "King and Constitution." "No Popery." "Glynne for ever." What think you of his political promises?

The proceedings of the new Ministry at this period, excited the deepest indignation in the upright mind of Sir S. Romilly, and he comments on the speech they composed for the King on the prorogation of Parliament, in the severest terms. "A part of the speech which cannot but excite disgust in the mind of every man, is that in which it is said, 'His Majesty has directed us most earnestly to recommend to you, that you should cultivate by all means in your power, a spirit of union, harmony, and good will, amongst all classes and descriptions of his people.' *What detestable hypocrisy.*"*

Parliament having been dissolved, it became necessary for the Grenville party to look to the security of their seats. Notwithstanding the use made of the Church and King† cry, the majority found no difficulty in being

* Memoirs, Vol. II., p. 206.

† "The new Ministers are, and have been doing all they can to excite a cry in the country against popery; and to use religion as an instrument to favour their ambition. Perceval, who, by accepting his office, has vacated his seat, tells the electors of Northampton, in his advertisement to them, that he doubts not that they will not think the worse of him for having, on

re-elected, or obtaining seats elsewhere: Sir George Nugent was returned for Aylesbury, Earl Temple for Buckinghamshire, Thomas Grenville and A. Neville for Buckingham, Admiral Berkeley for Gloucestershire, and Viscount Ebrington for St. Mawes. Mr. W. H. Fremantle and Captain Thomas Fremantle were opposed at Saltash. Other parliamentary arrangements are touched upon in the following communications.

MR. T. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Monday, April 26, 1807.

My dearest Brother,

As soon as I heard yesterday of the intended dissolution, I went to Lord Temple, from whom I found that an express had been already dispatched to you. The King has now made his speech, and you will see that it is one well deserving of comment, if there was any remaining parliament in which to comment upon it. While I write, your letter of Sunday night is brought up to me, by which I am sorry to see that you express more doubt about Saltash than Tucker has taught me to entertain. He goes down in the mail of to-night, and is full of zeal and confidence, and he entertains certainly no apprehension. With regard to Flint, I am by no means sure that it is not advisable for Shipley to stand as far as he can do so without expense, though perhaps with no sanguine hopes of success; because if he stands

this occasion, quitted his profession, and accepted his new office; that he shall not have forfeited their good opinion 'in consequence' (these are his words) 'of my coming forward in the service of my sovereign, and endeavouring to stand by him at this important crisis, when he is making so firm and so necessary a stand for the religious establishment of the country.' He then goes on to say, that to do this is a duty in the people as well as in the Sovereign."—*Diary of Sir Samuel Romilly.*

and succeeds, we have a friend; or if he stands and Sir Edward succeeds, we still have a friend; but if he declines, his interest, and that of Mrs. Stapleton and Mr. Williams, will go with Sir Stephen, who is supported by Lord Amherst and by government people, as being friendly to them on the present questions. Still, as between two half-nephews, I give no advice, and do not meddle or make, but as far as he can stand without expense to himself, he will best serve the political objects of our friends and his own.

As to Buckingham, my dearest brother, I can only say what you have seen in all my letters, that the House of Commons is really mortal to me, and I cannot attend a long night without a week's illness, and therefore I am entirely useless. I do, therefore, most earnestly urge you to consider what better means you may select of making our political consequence tell in these times of danger and violence; for a seat to me is now entirely lost, as I cannot apply it in any useful shape without certain and immediate malady. After Wyndham's unaccountable conduct, I am shy of political recommendations to you, but I know Tierney is quite at a loss, and I venture to ask you if you do not think our political strength would be increased by keeping him in our ranks, under the obligation of a seat, rather than by my name, when in my body and person I can no longer serve you. Pray think this over, and do in it what you think best; it never can be best to throw away a seat by giving it to me, who cannot use it.

They still say we are to be two hundred and twenty in the new parliament.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

April 27, 1807.

The deed is done, and in the most violent of all possible speeches. The cry is what must form their whole reliance. It

will certainly operate much in their favour; more than one could have thought possible in this age. I do not, however, think I reckon at all in a sanguine manner, when I put the new parliament as follows:

Government, 360
Opposition, 210
Doubtful, 88 including some contests, the result of which we cannot anticipate.
658

There are, however, some unpleasant and untoward circumstances. Fawkes declines Yorkshire, and Lord Stafford withdraws from Newcastle solely for the clamour, and as yet no seat has been found for Tierney, whom yet we must provide for somehow.

Ebrington has a severe contest at Barnstable, and Proby's election for Montgomery is quite desperate. I trust indeed Lord C. will not think of contesting it, as he can ill bear the expense for an object of so little importance to Proby, so long as he is employed abroad.

Stocks have risen to-day, with a report of a flag of truce being arrived. I know not whether the fact be true or not. The story is, that the Emperor Alexander has consented to treat, and our wiseacres in Change Alley, think that a very favourable circumstance for their funded property—which will bring Bonaparte in six months to contribute his share in Ireland to the support of the Protestant faith.

Some interesting observations respecting the transfer of seats in parliament may be found in Romilly's Diary of his Parliamentary Life. Sir Samuel was one of the many eminent men indebted to such an arrangement for becoming useful to the public. The great borough proprietors among both parties made use of this system, but

the traffic in seats was never carried to such excess as by the new government for the general election in 1807. "The truth is, that the new Ministers have bought up all the seats that were to be disposed of, and at any prices. Amongst others Sir C. H——, the great dealer in boroughs, has sold all he had to Ministers. With what money all this is done I know not, but it is supposed that the King, who has greatly at heart to preserve this new administration, the favourite objects of his choice, has advanced a very large sum out of his privy purse."*

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Downing Street, April 29, 1807.

MY DEAREST BROTHER,

The violence of the King's speech, will I think in some degree defeat itself. I am not aware of much management on this subject, respecting which I have expressed myself both in public and in private, with no other reserves than such as were due to my own age, station, and character, and with a most unequivocal condemnation of the wicked and desperate conduct of the government.

I have no doubt as to the numbers I sent you, of one hundred and sixty or more; in England there are not seventeen which I think liable to any doubt; in Ireland and Scotland I am less able to speak with confidence, but the learned in these matters have no fear of realizing our expectations there, which have by no means been formed on any sanguine calculation.

Lord Milton stands for Yorkshire, and Macdowal tries Newcastle; I know not with what hopes. Cornwall must remain as

* Memoirs, Vol. II., p. 206.

it is; there was some little fear of Northampton. Bedfordshire, I had hoped, might have been tried for another member, but I fear that idea is given up. Lord Howick's and Whitbread's advertisements are excellent, and should by all means be circulated through the country.

Nothing seems much fixed about Westminster, nor any body willing to embark in it. Elliot, the brewer, has I believe the government support. Lord Cochrane is talked of, and Hood's friends have advertised for him, but of course they cannot maintain a contest.

MR. T. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Admiralty, April 30, 1807.

My dearest Brother,

If you have read Lord Howick's advertisement with the same approbation and pleasure with which Lord Grenville and myself heard it from him, before he sent it to the paper, you will see that in our opinion as much as in yours, the measure of forbearance is full, and we must turn upon our assailants. In this view likewise, I no longer contend against your desire to return me for Buckingham, because, little as my health can now bear the attendance of parliament, my indignation may supply to my constitution more strength than naturally belongs to it; and if we are to be personally assailed by the authority, and by the ministers of the Crown, I have no disposition to withdraw myself from my humble share in the proscription with which we are menaced by the base and canting hypocrisy of the present Ministers. Meantime, I am taught to believe that you very much over-rate the impression which you suppose to be made upon our numbers; and although I am not a good list-maker, Tierney and Lord Grenville no longer than yesterday again passed through the list, and saw very little reason to apprehend any substantial change, beyond what was originally calculated upon.

We lose Sir G. Cornwall, but we get Foley instead; we lose Huntingdonshire, but Fitzpatrick is thought to be sure of turning out Osborn from Bedfordshire. Lord Morpeth and Lord Althorp both expect undisturbed elections, and so does Lord William Russell for Surrey. Lord Milton is very confident for Yorkshire, and unless Lascelles can get an immense subscription, I think he will not venture to persist. Undoubtedly, we shall lose in Cornwall and in Scotland very considerably; but I am still assured that we shall have above two hundred sure and determined friends in the House of Commons, and about half that number in the House of Lords; and when the proportion of the debaters is taken into the scale, I do not think the dissolution will have removed the thorns from Lord Castlereagh's bed of roses. The Duke of Devonshire has hopes of bringing in Tierney for Bandon. The Prince is, as I hear, quite outrageous with the new Ministers, whose arrangements respecting honours, salary, and establishment for the Princess, have already made the strongest impression of hostility to them in the mind of the Prince.

Of course, the fever of my moving from hence with all my goods and chattels will occupy me for some days; but whenever you will let me know your arrangements as to day of election, I will do my best to obey your orders if you wish me to be present. William goes to Dropmore on Wednesday, and possibly I may go there in the course of the week.

P.S. Vansittart stands for Berkshire, which ends all Neville's hopes there. It is a great drawback on the chance of Saltash to vary the candidates to whom direct promises had been given.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Downing Street, April 30, 1807.

MY DEAREST BROTHER,

I know nothing of this Mr. Nield. If you do, pray write to

him, he has, Lord Egremont says, two votes—his sons I believe.

You will of course canvass him for Lord Egremont and Lord H. Petty. I understand the contest is very severe, and the issue uncertain; so if you can do more, pray do it.

Fitzpatrick stands for Bedfordshire; can you help him?

Hood is withdrawn from Westminster, and they try Bridport for him. I should not be surprised if this should end in bringing in Burdett and Paull.*

Yours most affectionately,

G.

The position of the two great parties now being arrayed against each other, may be gathered from the accompanying letters. The new parliament opened on the 23rd, and in the royal speech much stress was laid on the recent exertions made by the King's loyal subjects "to support him in maintaining the just rights of his crown, and the true principles of the Constitution." The rest of the document was made up of lamentations for Sir J. Duckworth's failure, as a side blow at the Minister who had sanctioned the enterprise, and of representations of the importance of national union, which, as will presently be shown, excited severe animadversion.

The Opposition, it will be seen, was not inactive. A public dinner gave them an opportunity of marshalling their forces; and that every exertion for self-defence was necessary, was made sufficiently apparent by the tactics

* Sir Francis Burdett and Lord Cochrane were returned.

of their opponents. It soon appeared that no political quarter was to be given on either side; Lord Rolle on seconding the address in the House of Lords openly attacked the late administration for unconstitutional and insulting conduct to their sovereign; and Lords Fortescue, Holland, Erskine, Grosvenor, Lauderdale and Grenville spiritedly supported an amendment to the following effect:

"Our attachment to his Majesty obliges us to lay before him the culpable conduct of his Ministers, who, within a few months, have advised a dissolution of the late Parliament, in the midst of its first Session—a measure advised by his Majesty's Ministers when no difference existed between the two Houses, and when no necessity whatever could justify such a step. That by the interruption of private business, great inconvenience was incurred, and considerable expense wantonly added to the burthens of the country; that the dissolution retarded many useful laws for the encouragement of agriculture, manufacture, and commerce, and that it either suspended or wholly impeded many most wholesome public regulations. That we feel further bound to state, that the evil of this measure was aggravated by injurious pretences, under which it was sheltered; pretences which afforded no justification of it, but which excited dangerous animosities, at a time when the security of the empire was endangered, and when the utmost harmony and co-operation ought to have been cherished."

That the King's name should prove a tower of strength in the House of Lords, was no more than might have

been expected. Though the Opposition peers were most powerful in debate, in the division the strength was so completely the other way, that Ministers were able to establish a majority of ninety-three; the battle, however, was so far from won, that they were obliged to menace the great leader of the weaker party, with the fiercest persecution. Disgraceful accusations were insinuated; but when Lord Howick, in the House of Commons, dared the government to bring forward a single charge of peculation against his friends, nothing of the kind was attempted. The majorities for Ministers in the Lower House were even larger than those in the Upper; and with this advantage they remained satisfied.

Sir Samuel Romilly has left in his Diary an interesting account of the debate on Mr. Brand's motion. "Canning, after the most fulsome adulation of the King, said that he had made up his mind, when the Catholic Bill was first mentioned, *to vote for it if the King was for it, and against it, if the King was against it.* Every art was used to interest persons for the King: his age was repeatedly mentioned, his pious scruples, his regard for his coronation oath, which some members did not scruple to say, would have been violated if the Bill had passed. Canning endeavoured to allure men to his party by very gross expedients; he talked about the King's remarkable good health, and promise of long life and uncommon force and soundness of his understanding."*

* Memoirs, Vol. II., p. 200.

EARL TEMPLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Saturday.

The result of yesterday has confirmed all my predictions, and has proved how good a cause was hurt by an imprudent division. Our numbers actually in town, and accounted for, fully prove the correctness of our list, and the strength of our opposition. Many who upon other occasions will vote with us, stand away, and some under similar circumstances, voted against us last night. William Dickenson and Samuel Smith were amongst the latter. The numbers of government were certainly very great, but ours fully answered my expectations. The debate was a very dull one, until quite the latter part, when Canning's illiberality and violence moved even the coolness of my uncle Tom, and drew forth from Whitbread a *foaming* reproof. Canning, in discussing the circumstances attending the late change, places great confidence in the *forbearance* of his opponents. If he did not, he would hardly subject himself to the possibility of experiencing such a retort as he knows he is liable to. His speech last night, in which he complimented Brother Bragge, added to some private information which I have received, convinces me that his boasted firmness is shaken, and that, "if the Grenvilles make unceasing attacks upon the government, and the Sidmouths support it, the arguments which have hitherto been urged *with effect* by the minority against the majority in the Cabinet, against taking Lord Sidmouth in, will lose their strength, and will be brought forward with diminished force." The English of this is not difficult to be understood, and the intimation it gives is not much calculated to abate the violence of that opposition which is likely to produce effects which would be as subversive of the power of the government as of the consistency and character of C—. Perceval was very weak, and proved for the fourth time that a chattering

lawyer in opposition, does not necessarily make a good manager of the House of Commons as minister.

I had intended to have spoken at length, but the ground had been completely occupied by Lord Howick and Perceval; and, as I hate going over beaten ground, merely for the purpose of making a speech, I determined to sit quiet. Ryder, however, making a violent attack upon Lord Grenville, and calling upon his friends to support his consistency in supporting a coalition now, who was so active in overturning one in 1784, and in deprecating a dissolution upon a popular cry now, who at that period took the same advantage of a similar cry; and my uncle Tom not being exactly the person to take up those cudgels, I did think it right to descant a little upon the attack which Ryder had made upon the character of Mr. Pitt, who, if report said true, had been employed and had endeavoured to bring about a coalition of a much more extensive nature, and to draw the distinction between the cry of chartered rights in 1784, against a measure which had been carried by the Minister of the day through the House of Commons, and which was thrown out in the Lords, and the present cry which was raised against a measure which was withdrawn, and against which the cry was not raised until it had been withdrawn, and the danger therefore (if any there was,) had ceased with the cause. I showed the difference also, between a dissolution at a time when a difference did exist between two branches of the Legislature, by which they were completely at issue, and one at a time when it was not called for by any such circumstance. My uncle Tom's wrath was excited by Canning's illiberal attack on Lord Milton, and by his insinuations which he did not dare avow, against the plan of the Dardanelles and Egyptian expedition. He spoke with great animation and effect.

Ever affectionately, and dutifully yours.

LORD AUCKLAND TO EARL TEMPLE.

Eden Farm, June 17, 1807.

My dear Lord Temple,

Many thanks for yours of the 15th. It was quite a cordial to me to hear a few lines from you after so long a cessation of correspondence.

I do not believe that you overrate the returns when you state our certain friends at two hundred and twenty; and before the new Ministers oppose their estimate, they must make a proper allowance for all the separated squadrons of Addingtonians, Burdettians, speculatists, saints, absentees, &c. On the whole, I do not suppose that they will have more than two hundred and eighty in the field, or that we shall be able to bring to a July campaign more than one hundred and sixty. I am not sanguine as to any immediate or early result of the struggle; nor can I feel certainty as to any result, except that the empire is subjected, for a long period of time, to all the mischiefs of divided parties, and popular animosities, much beyond what the perilous circumstances of the age can admit, and such as with the addition of a weak ministry, cannot fail to create a predicament of public affairs of the most calamitous description. But so it is, and in part, our own friends have contributed to it by a want of ordinary caution, reasonable pliability, and due preconcert. They had seen enough of the world, and knew those with whom they were dealing, sufficiently to know that they were exposed to all that happened, and they should have acted accordingly. I feel as indignant as they can do at the duplicity of which they complain; but I feel also that it is peculiarly incumbent on them to postpone every other earthly consideration, and to respect, if it be possible, (which I sometimes doubt,) the position to which the government is brought.

I presume that the debates will be animated enough in both

houses; but we have all the disadvantages of a dog-day Session. Our friends will soon withdraw their attendance, unless such questions shall arise, or be brought forwards, as may necessarily, keep them together. It will, I think, be the policy of Ministers to postpone whatever can be postponed, and to shorten the Session. I am really sorry that Mr. Tierney is not in parliament at the opening. The whole struggle will be over before he can be returned. I conceive that the double returns will be decided in this Session.

Lady Auckland desires to be most kindly mentioned to you. We are going to-morrow to Col. Vansittart's, and shall be at Dropmore from Saturday till Monday.

In the course of a political life of thirty-six years, I have invariably declined all political dinners, and am now much too old to begin that regimen. Mr. Eden has written to the steward that he will be happy to attend.

Believe me, my dear Lord Temple.

Ever most sincerely yours,

AUCKLAND.

It is difficult to account for the pertinacity with which Sir Archibald Alison returns to his charge against the Grenville administration, of having withheld succours from the Emperor of Russia, during his struggle with the armies of Napoleon that may be said to have concluded with the battle of Friedland. The real state of the case has been already described:* the Emperor refused the loan that was offered him—nevertheless, what assistance could be spared, was forwarded with as little delay as possible. It is not at all improbable that when evidence appeared of the earnestness of Alexander to maintain the

* See page 108.

interests of his allies, more important succours would have been despatched, but the responsibility of this administration for the failure of the campaign, ceased when they quitted office in the middle of March.

The battle of Friedland was fought on the 12th of June, which afforded ample time to their successors to have sent any amount of assistance to the Czar, had they been more liberally disposed towards him. If any party be to blame for withholding assistance when it was required, it was not the Grenville, but the Portland administration: the former promptly offered liberal aid on what ought to be considered very easy terms, and had they been accepted, Russia would at once have possessed those resources, the want of which was the alleged excuse for the nefarious treaty of Tilsit. The Duke of Portland, with a nearer view of the contest and unlimited professions of active co-operation in the war, organised a vast expedition, which contrived to enter upon hostilities two months after the struggle had terminated." Lord Cathcart and Admiral Gambier conducted this armament, not to assist the Czar, who had become the ally of Napoleon, and his confederate in imperial notions of spoliation, but to attack Denmark, with whom the English were at peace.

There cannot, however, be a doubt that the excuse of the Czar for withdrawing from the contest, was a sham. After the battle of Friedland, he was very far from being in that hopeless state for want of English assistance he represented. He had 112,000 regulars, and 400,000 militia, with which he could have continued the campaign with every prospect of ultimate advantage against Napo-

leon's force, which, though triumphant, had been so roughly handled by the Russian generals, that their commander found himself unable to follow up his advantage. The simple truth is, that Alexander became satisfied that he might gain more by treating with his distinguished opponent, than by fighting with him. The secret articles of the treaty of Tilsit shows how well Napoleon understood his motives in proposing to negotiate for peace; and in the conditions of that disgraceful bargain, will be found the fullest justification of the prudent proposal of the Grenville administration, in reply to his request for a loan.

MR. W. H FREMANTLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Stanhope Street, June 22, 1807.

MY DEAR LORD,

I have just got your letter, and perfectly agree in the advantage that will probably be derived in deferring our petition till next year, and I am still led to think from all I learn, that Perceval will not bring on any election questions before that time. There is one thing I lament, as it will prevent me from taking an opportunity, if it should arise, of explaining the conduct and the general line which was pursued by Lord Grenville, while he presided at the Treasury. You may depend upon it, from what I learn, and I know I am not misinformed upon this subject, they will endeavour to lessen his character of integrity and economical management, during the time he was First Lord, and it unfortunately happens, that there is not a soul in the House who is at all master of the subject of the Treasury department, excepting Vansittart, who will not defend him. I can assure you of this, for I wrote to ask him as a friend of the last government to dine at Willis's, and his answer was, that he could not without con-

sulting Lord Sidmouth. Wickham is not in Parliament, and even if he was, is not in the habit of getting up in the House. Lord H. Petty knows nothing beyond the finance department of it, and my opinion is, that they will endeavour to attack him in detail, and I am more strengthened in this belief from having been told within these two or three days, by more than one of their friends, (by Mr. Sturges Bourne) that I should be unable to open my lips, or to sit anywhere but under the gallery. I think this is unlucky, on many accounts, towards Lord Grenville; for my own part, it is very immaterial, and I am indifferent about it, excepting that I should be extremely sorry not to seize every opportunity of expressing my sentiments upon such attacks, by detailing the general system which he pursued in his administration of the Treasury, and of always resisting the insinuations which will be made, and the comparisons which will be drawn between the arrangement of this and the last parliament, and the expences and interference of government upon it. I have taken pains to gain information of their interference to the greatest degree upon the present occasion.

There is another consideration which I think might have been most important, if I could have taken my seat, namely, that I think they must have put me in their new list of the Committee of Finance. We have lost a most invaluable man upon it, in Giles, who does not get a seat immediately, and I fear they will try to exclude everything that may be friendly to your connexions. It so happens, that excepting Lord H. Petty, there is not one man of business who belonged to the Treasury in parliament, and I think this extremely unlucky; but, however, it can't be helped, and so far it will save me much trouble and attendance. They are annoyed to death at our dinner, which marks so strongly the energy and intention of the Opposition, and you may depend upon it, they are differing among themselves, and suspicious of one another. I have no doubt Lord Sidmouth will now come in—many circumstances lead me to believe this, and not the least so, Vansittart's

note to me. I have not yet seen Lord Grenville, who comes to-day; I shall call upon him presently, and if any change in the intentions occur, you shall hear from me.

I am glad to hear we have Sir Samuel Hood; it makes up for a Mr. Wardle, of Oakhampton, who we calculated upon, but have lost. I hear, also, from Lord Temple we shall not have Blackburn, but notwithstanding the unpopularity of opposing an address, and everything that can be brought against us, I cannot possibly think we shall divide less than one hundred and fifty. Our dinner will be about one hundred and seventy.

Ever, with great affection and respect,

Most sincerely yours,

W. H. Fremantle.

I am this instant come in, and find Lord Grenville does not come to town till to-morrow morning. The Speaker is elected, proposed by Yorke, and seconded by Bankes. Calcraft made an extremely happy observation, by professing the highest opinion, &c., &c., but the principal reason upon which he grounded his approbation of Mr. Abbot was the vote which he gave in the case of Lord Melville. I think the immediate production of Lord Melville's name, and the subject remarkably good, and Calcraft did it very neatly.

Yorke's language was great professions of moderation and disclaiming party motives. William Smith answered, that on this subject there probably, was no party motive, but if every opposition to the measures of the present Ministers was to be considered party, he probably, and many others in that House, would incur such a reproach, if it could be called one. There are now one hundred and forty answers to Lord Cholmondeley in the affirmative, and I think the dinner will amount to near two hundred. If you don't take in the "Morning Chronicle" let me know, and I will send you the one of to-day, which gives a very clear and distinct statement of

our returns—it is the same that was made out by Tierney and myself, and which I sent you; but it is introduced by saying, that the sense of the people was to be taken, and that of the two hundred and twenty-six and one hundred and ninety-six, who voted on the motions of Messrs. Brand and Littleton, one hundred and eighty are again returned; it then divides into a separate class, the new members, and such as are not supposed to be attached to government.

MR. T. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

June 23, 1807.

My dearest Brother,

When I came from Stowe I left with you a few naval papers, which I may now be in want of; will you be so good as to return them to me under cover to Mr. Marsden, whose official functions will last a very few days longer, as he immediately retires to make room for Wellesley Pole.

I returned yesterday, and find that our dinner on Wednesday is likely to be attended by about one hundred and seventy; the "Morning Chronicle" will have shown you our House of Commons'' list, which certainly will not make the bed of roses more grateful to the feelings of Ministers. How many of them we shall get to attend, I know not, but to judge of others by myself, the present Session will not be very zealously attended, as I shall very soon make my bow to it, in spite of all the menaces of inquiries and impeachments for Constantinople and Alexandria; they may hang me, if they please, but I had rather I think be hanged in peace, than engage in parliamentary debates in the months of July and August.

The King is grown very blind, but they keep up his spirits by telling him that a cataract is forming, which will be removed by couching in two months time. The Prince is described to have had another liver attack, which lessens the confidence that

offers a very frightful prospect of the state in which the country may be found when it is called upon to fight its last stake against the hostilities of France; and that moment seems to be approaching faster than people are prepared to see it come, for it seems highly probable, that in spite of the success of our German Legion, the fall of Dantzic will make Bonaparte's peace with Russia, and Sweden, and Prussia, and will leave him at liberty to challenge us to single contest. Denmark is said to have strongly remonstrated against our troops appearing in the Baltic.

MR W. H. FREMANTLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Stanhope Street, June 25, 1807.

My dear Lord,

Our dinner went off most famously; probably Lord Temple will give you an account of it; one hundred and eighty-three—forty-three Peers, and the others, Commons; this insures us one hundred and fifty for the division on the address. You may depend upon it, the dinner, and the manner in which it was conducted, is the most bitter and sore attack they have yet had, and they feel it more than anything that could have occurred.

Our numbers from Ireland are immense; already twenty-nine come over, and four or five more expected. I have this moment seen Tierney, and I think we may satisfy ourselves that, if notice is given of some motion to-morrow, to be made a week hence, we shall divide one hundred and seventy. Such a division in such a Session is infinitely more than any government can stand; and it is not only the prospect of this division, but, you may rely upon it, the cry of the public is with us. The tone of London is altered.

The amendment is to contain little more than a strong censure upon the dissolution in all its points of view; there is a meeting to-night at Lord Grenville's and Lord

Howick to read it. At present it is intended the latter shall move it himself. Lord Newark moves the address, and a Mr. Hall, member for Totness, (whom I brought into the last parliament at the recommendation of Charles Wynn) seconds it; he is a lawyer, and a man of no calibre. Lord Fortescue, of course, you know, moves the amendment. Lord Mansfield moves it, and I forget who seconds it. I have not picked up one word more on the subject of the Election Committees; it will probably be determined to-morrow.

Ever, with great respect and attachment,

Most affectionately yours,

W. H. Fremantle.

MR. W. H. FREMANTLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Stanhope Street, June 29, 1807.

My dear Lord,

I have just heard that it is meant not to try any question whatever this Session on controverted elections, and therefore there is less necessity of my coming down. I have inquired further, and I find that Perceval has expressed this intention to others besides Leach. I think that this is very good for our cause; as at any rate, it gives us till after Christmas; and God knows what may happen between this and then. The government are certainly extremely alarmed at the meeting; for although they are satisfied of their great majority, yet they dread the attack that will be made upon them; and their language is very different indeed from what it was a month ago. I saw the Duke of Bedford yesterday, who told me we should certainly have thirty from Ireland. I have this instant left Tierney, who has no doubt of our dividing one hundred and fifty. My opinion is, and I think you will find it just, that the Ministers will have two hundred and eighty, and the Opposition between one hundred and fifty and one hundred and sixty.

But I have now to give you a drawback upon our strength which I am afraid will be fatal, which is the state of Lord Grey's health. He is infinitely worse; and from what I learn from Tierney, who had just left Lady Grey, I should not be surprised if he dies in the course of a day or two; and even the most sanguine hopes cannot look to his lasting beyond a month. I speak of Lord Howick's loss in the House of Commons as irreparable—perfectly so, as long as the connection lasts which now exists between your friends and him; and I am sure you will see with me that nothing can take his place: Mr. Grenville's health does not enable him; and there, in my opinion, the chapter ends. It is a most unfortunate circumstance.

Notwithstanding I am satisfied that the government does not mean to try any question of election, or to ballot for any committee, it would, no doubt, be advisable for you to satisfy yourself from Carpenter equally on the subject, that we may be prepared for any change in their intention.

If I had not been satisfied of the question of Saltash being deferred, I should undoubtedly have come down to-morrow. Lord Grenville comes to town on Monday, and I shall certainly take an immediate opportunity of speaking to him about a division on the address, which I am more satisfied every hour is not so advisable as upon any other subject whatever. Lord Percy at present will not vote for an amendment, though he is with us on other questions. You shall certainly hear from me in the course of Monday or Tuesday, and know the decision that is finally made. I am afraid we shall have a lamentable division in the House of Lords.

Ever my dear Lord, with great respect,

Your Lordship's most faithful

And affectionate humble servant,

W. H. Fremantle.

The incident mentioned at the commencement of Mr. Fremantle's next note, is thus described by a contemporary:

"Perceval artfully introduced his motion by stating several instances of the late Ministers having created new places, or given improperly pensions, as a reason why there ought not to be upon a committee, who were to inquire into improper transactions of that kind, so many friends of the late Ministers. The true object of this was manifestly to divert the attention of the House from the real question; and in a great degree it had that effect."*

MR. W. H. FREMANTLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Stanhope Street, July 1, 1807.

My dear Lord,

There was a remarkable good debate last night, in which the Ministers failed most extremely, and our division improved; not that it was a division upon which we can build, as it was composed of the Doctor's friends, and many county members, who will not continue to vote with us; but the principle upon which Perceval thought proper to justify his changing the names, will not recommend the government very much to the public opinion.

Every debate that has taken place, shows more and more the misfortune of not having a person belonging to the late Board of Treasury in parliament. The attacks they have made on the subject of different grants, which apply personally to Lord Grenville, particularly the surveyors of taxes, and the Buenos Ayres appointments, are attacks which I could have put down immediately; but Lord Henry Petty, to whom I sent and told

* Diary of Sir Samuel Romilly. Memoirs, Vol. II., p. 211.

the particulars, had not sufficient confidence to take upon himself the responsibility. It is quite cruel on Lord Grenville. Last night I begged of Lord Howick to state the particulars of these transactions in answer to Canning's second attack upon them, who did it, but at the same time was obliged to qualify it, by saying he had been so informed.

I am afraid all this bad news from Poland is confirmed; there are letters from Hamburgh this morning, which speak of it. Of course it must end in a separate peace, and our government will then endeavour to hatch up one. I should think any peace would be popular in this country, but must be without the hope of continuance.

I shall probably know to-morrow whether the petition will be heard this Session; and, if not, I shall go out of town in a day or two.

Ever, with great truth and attachment,
Most affectionately,
W. H. FREMANTLE.

Among the new members of the Privy Council were Lord Melville, Lord Teignmouth, and Sir Arthur Wellesley. The first had for some time been in active opposition to the late government, and promised to be an equally active member of the present. The last was a far more important accession, though at the time it was generally regarded as of no particular significance. This highly talented officer shortly obtained employment, but not in a post for which his successful career in India had fitted him. He became Secretary in Ireland, under the circumstances mentioned by himself in the following letter; the sentiments of which are singularly characteristic of his honourable and manly nature.

SIR ARTHUR WELLESLEY TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

London, July 8, 1807.

My dear Lord,

Dr. Little has delivered to me your very kind letter, which has, if possible, strengthened the sentiments of respect and gratitude which I have always felt for your Lordship. I acknowledge that of the many circumstances which occasion my dislike of the office which I fill, that which has weighed most heavily upon my mind, has been the certainty that it would cause a discontinuance of the terms of intimacy and kindness on which I had always lived with you and your family, and I was convinced that I could not acquire the advantages again, till I should have an opportunity of explaining to you the principle on which I had acted, and should have relinquished all concern in politics.

When I returned to England from India, I determined to have nothing to do with politics, and I was induced to go into parliament, solely by the situation in which my brother was placed when he came home. Your Lordship is well aware of the manner in which he has been treated by all those who formed the late government, with the exception of the family and friends of Lord Grenville, Lord Sidmouth, and yourself; and when you consider of that treatment, you will not be surprised that he and I, and all those friends whose opinions he consulted, should have thought that it was absolutely impossible to follow those persons into opposition to the King's government, notwithstanding that it was very painful to him to separate from Lord Grenville, and to me to have any concern in politics with a government which you should oppose. Shortly after Lord Wellesley found it necessary to come to this determination, an offer was made to me to be the secretary of the government in Ireland, which I accepted on the condition that it should not prevent my being employed in my profession

when opportunity should offer; and I acknowledge that, considering the manner in which the offer was conveyed to me, that Lord Wellesley had determined to support the new government, and that they were likely to be placed in difficult circumstances in Ireland, I did not think myself at liberty to decline it.

This is the short history of the events which induced me to believe that the kindness which I had received, and the intimacy in which I had lived with your family would be discontinued; and I have received with the greatest satisfaction the proof which your Lordship's letter affords, that I was mistaken.

After Dr. Little had left Ireland, I had a conversation with the Duke of Richmond, in respect to his wishes for his son; and I have every reason to believe that the Duke will consent to the proposed arrangement, which I will forward as much as may be in my power, as soon I shall return to Ireland.

I beg to present my best respects to Lady Buckingham, and Lady Mary, and,

I have the honour to be, my dear Lord,
Your most obedient, and most obliged humble servant,
ARTHUR WELLESLEY

Lord Grenville's observations respecting the "system of training up militia officers to volunteer from time to time with their companies into the army," are entitled to the fullest consideration during the present war; but while our regular forces are in the field, the prospects of the subaltern could not be greatly interfered with by such an arrangement, if at all. There ought to be no difficulty in this country, knowing what nearly half a century since, the Training Bill effected, with a much smaller population, and resources bearing no comparison with those we now possess, to create a military force of two or three hundred thousand men.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Wednesday.

I have just time to acknowledge your letter, my dearest brother, and to thank you for the trouble you have taken.

My chief difficulty, as to the ideas you suggest, arises from the notion of a supplementary militia, to which, if it really was what its name professes, an additional militia, I should feel insurmountable objections, being, as you truly state, very doubtful as to the benefit even of the present militia, as it now stands. If the volunteer establishment, or any considerable part of it, could be made into such a militia, that, indeed, would go far to reconcile me to it.

You will see that, although we may force or persuade our military people to take once for all militia officers into the roll of the army, yet a system of training up militia officers to volunteer from time to time with their companies into the army, and so get permanent rank there, would disgust, and justly too, the whole of the subalterns of our army.

I am, however, very desirous to see your ideas more brought out. Nothing can be done that is not full of difficulty; but I fear that the doing nothing at all, would be the worst of all.

There is, as you must see, no possibility of suspending the Training Act, except in favour of some such plan as this.

We have accounts to-day of a battle near Königsberg;* the French accounts of which (and we have no other) you will see in the papers. I think it has been a drawn battle, and on both sides very bloody. You will observe, that though the French represent the Russians as abandoning their position, &c., yet they do not talk of advancing, but of resuming their winter quarters.

* Fought on the 14th of June.

It became manifest that the Opposition were not likely to remove the new government, and "ratting" in consequence grew alarmingly frequent. The Grenvilles, however, had for some time been satisfied that no advantage to the country could be derived from a party struggle. Their recollections of office were far from sufficiently agreeable to entice them to make any efforts for re-possession, and they were influenced by too much genuine patriotism to sanction a factious antagonism to the government, however factious its proceedings had been considered by them; we therefore meet with a less active hostility, and a more serious appreciation of the increasing difficulties of the country.

MR. T. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Friday.

My dearest Brother,

You will have heard from Lord Grenville that Lord Moira (on the part of the Prince and of himself, as a follower of the Prince), has declared the partnership to be at an end. You will likewise observe that all the Saints, including Wilberforce and Thornton, who were originally with us, as well as Bankes, who was doubtful, have now taken decidedly their part against us. These three defections of Doctor, of Prince, and of Saints, will give the government strength enough to maintain themselves; but the expectation of dissolution is not in the least diminished, but rather increases with their increasing force.

It is said that the King has refused to make them any more peers, after Sutton. The language of the courtiers is to say that we have brought the King to trial in the two houses of parliament; and they are still industrious in circulating the cry of

Church and King, with all the violence of the most bigotted times.

I am now got pretty well again, but I cannot challenge the certain malady of the House of Commons.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Dropmore, Aug. 6, 1807.

My dearest Brother,

I send you a letter which I received a few days since from Mr. Newenham, whose work on the population of Ireland you have probably read, and (I should think) with the same satisfaction which I felt in so very clear and masterly a way of discussing a subject of considerable difficulty and intricacy. I have no knowledge of him, and could easily answer him, that never having, as I recollect, either written or spoken to Doctor Troy in my life, I cannot intrude my advice upon him on a matter relating to the discharge of his functions.

But you, perhaps, might not find any difficulty in writing to Troy on this business, if you agree with me in thinking that some good may arise, and no evil can, from giving to the world, and particularly to the good people of England, a little more information on a matter on which they are so lamentably ignorant, as on the state of Ireland.

I have, therefore, suspended returning any answer to Newenham till I hear from you upon the subject. When you write, return me his letter, as I have no other direction to him.

I am full of gloomy thoughts as to the crisis which is coming so fast upon us, and for which I see no adequate preparation, either in the measures taken, or in the minds and disposition of the country. I am happy that you have had the opportunity of vindicating us from the imputation of undervaluing the dangers of the country at this moment, for in my mind this cannot be overrated. The conduct and language of what is

called the opposition, had given too much countenance to such representations, but certainly they convey a just picture of my impressions now, and I believe of yours.

A vast expedition, combining a powerful fleet with a considerably army—twenty-seven sail of the line, and twenty thousand troops—the former commanded by Admiral Gambier, the latter by General Lord Cathcart, was in August, 1807, despatched to the Baltic, and suddenly appeared before Copenhagen. Intelligence had reached the English government that Napoleon intended to avail himself of the naval resources of Denmark, the better to accomplish his hostile designs against England, and well aware both of his power and inclination to effect such an enterprise, the government of this country had determined to anticipate him. The demand for the surrender of the Danish fleet being refused, the capital was bombarded, and a military force landed, led by Sir Harry Burrard, Sir David Baird, Sir Arthur Wellesley, and General Spencer. After a fruitless struggle, the Danish fleet, consisting of one ship of ninety-six guns, one of eighty-four, eight of seventy-four, one of sixty-four, one of fifty-four, four of forty-four, one of thirty-six, two of twenty-eight, two of twenty-four, one of twenty-two, three of twenty, six brigs, and twenty-five gun-boats, were surrendered and carried to England. This transaction was very severely condemned by Lord Grenville and other honourable-minded men in this country; as, judged by ordinary rules, such an enterprise against a power with which we were at peace, that had given us no just cause of offence, appears to be indefensible; but it should in

justice be added, that the English government had barely a choice of evils, and to allow Napoleon to accomplish his purpose had more terrors for them, than the odium which must arise from perpetrating a violation of the law of nations.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Boconnoc, August 25, 1807.

My dearest Brother,

I hear there is much speculation in favour of peace, and placing so little hope as I do in the war projects which seem to be afloat, I should look upon that event as a blessing, if it could be procured on any terms short of national disgrace and ruin; but I do not myself expect that it can.

I am full of uneasiness on the subject of the Danish expedition. I am afraid it is a harder bone to pick than has been imagined here; but I understand they rely much on the absence of the Danish troops, the greater part of which are said to be in Holstein, from whence their return to Copenhagen is to be prevented by Keats's squadron. The risk is certainly very great; for if we lose that army, I know not how another is to be formed; and the act of the last Session has of course for a time rendered the militia of little avail. The accounts which I hear (they are not many) from Ireland, are very bad.

All that one can do in such a state of public affairs, and precluded from all means of assisting it, is to strive to forget it while one can, and to enjoy those blessings which are yet in our reach, so long as Providence shall continue them to us.

MR. T. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Bala, Aug. 25, 1807.

I return you your interesting letter, for which I am much

obliged to you, and agree with you most entirely, that whatever is the indignation of the army at Petersburgh, or of the ministers at Vienna, the state of those two Courts is desperate, unless there were found in the councils of those countries, men of more vigour and enterprise than have as yet been produced by these perilous and momentous events.

I find by a letter just received (confidentially) from Garlike, that they have moved him from Copenhagen, almost in disgrace, to Memel, because he would not write them word that the Danes were making hostile naval preparations at Copenhagen. He protests to me in his vindication, that not the slightest preparation has been made by them, and has sent me a formal report, made to him by Captain Beaumont, of the 'Procris,' whom he sent to exercise the ships at Copenhagen, on the 25th July. Beaumont's words are: "I can venture to assert there is not at present the shadow of the appearance of the equipment of any fleet, and it is impossible that any such could be made and hid from a naval eye. The state of the fleet is precisely the same as it has been ever since Lord Nelson's battle."

Nothing can be more decisive; but as our Ministers were determined to act as if Denmark had armed, they revenge themselves upon poor Garlike, for speaking the truth, instead of saying what was agreeable to their wishes.

They are really the shabbiest set of dirty politicians that was ever seen. I think the Danes will resist us, for the French are too near them to let them temporise.

Emperor Alexander attributes the loss of his battles to our refusal of a loan.

The Emperor of Russia must have been very much in want of an excuse for having been beaten by Napoleon, when he started the one mentioned in the last sentence. The truth is, his Imperial Majesty had taken quite a

different line, and having entered into a close alliance with the Emperor of France, he endeavoured to recommend himself to his new ally by misrepresenting his old one. It is wonderful how rapidly these two "high contracting parties" during their conference at Tilsit, came to an understanding. Indeed, there is no parallel instance in ancient or modern history of two such formidable belligerents so hastily patching up a peace, to allow of their pursuing their own designs of encroachment upon their weaker neighbours. While describing this discreditable compact, a modern historian thus refers to its principal features:

"The rulers of the continent drew an imaginary line across Europe, and mutually gave each other *carte blanche* in regard to spoliations, however unjustifiable, committed on their own side of the division. Napoleon surrendered half the European territories of Turkey to Alexander, and appropriated the other half to himself; while Alexander engaged to throw no obstacles in the way of the dethronement of the sovereigns of the Spanish Peninsula, to make way for the elevation of princes of the Bonaparte family."*

Thiers and Bignon afford full information respecting the secret designs of the two Emperors, of whom it is difficult to say which exhibited the most glaring unscrupulousness. From these unquestionable authorities, it is manifest that Napoleon's chief idea throughout his numerous conferences with Alexander, was the humiliation and ultimate destruction of the British empire.

* Alison's "History of Europe," Vol. VII., p. 56.

The letter that follows, conveys a severe commentary on the most deplorable of the inglorious expeditions of this period, from which it is easy to see where the blame ought to rest—most assuredly, no part of it with the ex-First Lord of the Admiralty, whose spirit and intelligence ought to have created very different results. The contents of the subsequent letter, by the same writer, will be found equally worthy of perusal.

MR. T. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM

Boconnoc, Sept. 16, 1807.

My dearest Brother,

I have just received a letter from Murray, from Buenos Ayres, with the disastrous account of Whitelocke's expedition. I confess that I am not much surprised at the result, and although I know no details, I think I see in Murray's letter enough to convince me that there was a total want of common military conduct in the attack that was made. The necessity of our capitulation is endeavoured to be justified upon the two grounds of the loss we had incurred in killed and wounded from the houses in the town, and in the number of prisoners taken with Crawfurd, who were menaced with death if we refused the capitulation. Now, considering the previous knowledge we had of their defending their town by firing from houses and churches, it is manifest that Whitelocke should have given early notice that in case of any such defence being adopted, the town should be fired without mercy at the very first shot which should be discharged from a house or from a church. And secondly, with regard to the prisoners, and the menace of killing them, such a menace is only to be resisted by threats of retaliation instead of offers of submission. The unpardonable part of the failure in my eyes, is to have made the attack without almost a certainty of success. With Monte Video

in our hands, and the river at the command of our ships, what had we to do to go and knock our brains out against the narrow streets of Buenos Ayres? The thing speaks for itself, and shows a total want of common prudence on the part of our military officers. There is no surprise that can help to excuse them, nor any event, as far as I know, that was not evidently and plainly arising out of the situation of things. I never knew of any army that could safely enter the narrow lanes and streets of a town, except with the determination of burning it down, if they were fired upon from the houses; and why Beresford did not do that in the first instance, and Whitelock in the second, I cannot guess.

Murray writes that "Whitelocke told him he could destroy the town, but that he should not so be enabled to conquer the country; and that this consideration, together with his fear for the prisoners, made him think it necessary to sign the capitulation." But why then did he make this attack? why did he not keep the fortress and the river, and send home to say that he could destroy Buenos Ayres, but could neither force it to surrender, nor find in it any friends to our interest. How came Crawfurd and all his brigade to be made prisoners at once by a tumultuous multitude? The whole history seems to me to be disgraceful beyond measure to our officers, although I have no doubt that our troops behaved with their accustomed gallantry. After all, this is a precious result of Sir H. Popham's plundering and privateering expedition, and contributes not a little to lower our military character in Europe, in the very moment in which it is the most essential to us to establish it. I am no enemy (as the "Morning Chronicle" is) to the Danish expedition, the principle of which may, as I think, be well justified, upon the grounds of the hostile mind of Denmark to this country, and the new danger arising from Bonaparte's Baltic influence. I do not, therefore, object to the Danish expedition in principle; but I think it was undertaken too late

and carried on too tardily; and I confess that I have too little confidence in Lord Cathcart and Lord Rosslyn, to like to see 30,000 of our best troops within the reach of the immense force that France can pour in there, if military operations shall be protracted at Copenhagen till the frost sets in. Can we afford force enough to look to the hope of the permanent possession of Zeeland? If not, what are we doing in this state of delay?

I have just heard from Tucker from Plymouth; he writes me word that he is desired by Lord St. Vincent to inform us that a detachment of troops is preparing to accompany the East India convoy as far as Madeira, and to take that island. Tucker adds that a company of artillery was embarked at Plymouth last Saturday to join this expedition at Cork, and two petards arrived by the mail that morning to accompany them.

A letter from Lord Temple at Exeter announces him here for next Friday or Saturday.

A vessel arrived last Monday from Halifax to Plymouth in twenty-nine days, but Tucker has heard of no news by her.

MR. T. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Butleigh, Oct. 9, 1807.

MY DEAREST BROTHER,

As I did not receive your letter from Stowe till the moment in which I was stepping into my chaise and leaving Boconnoc, it was not possible for me to have any conversation with my brother, upon the two particular points which seem to press the most upon your mind. In the three weeks which I passed at Boconnoc, we were so entirely taken up with his very just admiration of Boconnoc, and with his various plans for the improvement of it, and for the addition of a marine cottage on the sea-coast, that we had scarcely any political conversation whatever; and as Mr. Fagel was constantly with us, those topics were

scarcely ever mentioned beyond the common occurrences of the newspaper; indeed, I have never at any time seen my brother so entirely absorbed in the delights of his improvements, and so unaffectedly averse to all political discussions. I suppose, however, they will again recur when he again approaches London, and whenever that is the case, undoubtedly it will be very desirable that you should converse together very fully upon every point which is likely to become interesting to you. With respect to peace, I have certainly very little taught myself to believe in any advantages from it, and certainly see very much indeed to apprehend from it; my brother has, I think, the same apprehensions that you and I have, but he is naturally more sensible than either of us to the immediate difficulties of the finance, and seems inclined to think our only hope was that of being enabled to sustain the expense of a defensive war, but that if we embark in the boundless cost of these large expeditions, the cost will be such as we cannot sustain; and this opinion is, I dare say, very exactly what you will also feel upon the subject.

As to the question of America and George Berkeley, the first is difficult and delicate, but with respect to George Berkeley, undoubtedly your friendship for him would alone be a sufficient notice with Lord Grenville as well as with me, to ensure our doing all that can be done to meet your wishes on this subject. I have no fear of the slightest difference of opinion between any of us, on any of these subjects, on all of which I hope to talk with you before I reach London. I am now on my road to Wynnstay, and then to Trentham, after which I hope to see you at Stowe, but know not how to fix any time till I hear more decidedly about the meeting of parliament.

Lord Glastonbury quotes a Treasury clerk for saying that parliament must meet before Christmas to give them some Exchequer Bills, and Lord Westmoreland held the same language a fortnight ago to Lady Elizabeth Palk, but Lord Boringdon assured me the

parliament would not meet till early in January, and he is likely to speak from Canning's authority, so that I know not what to think.

I am scandalized at finding among my naval friends at Plymouth, that Gambier is to be a peer—what has he done to deserve it? I was told at Plymouth that our Ministers are to be stout about the American question, and that they take the shabby course of promoting Berkeley to the Jamaica station in lieu of Dacres; this is so like their little paltry services, that I almost think it is true, although I have it not from very good authority.

You will be glad to hear that Lord Glastonbury and the General are both very stout, and have been climbing up the Tor with me this morning.

Between certain members of the government and of the Opposition old friendships existed, which allowed an interchange of civilities; the opinions, however, of Lord Grenville, given under his own hand, show that he could not alter his judgment of the former as Ministers, however much his sense of the alarming position of the country might influence his conduct towards them in or out of parliament.

MR. E. COOKE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Downing Street, Oct. 17, 1807.

My dear Lord,

I communicated to Lord Castlereagh from the country the substance of your Lordship's kind note, and his Lordship thinks it does you the greatest honour; and notwithstanding your designs against his neck, he wishes your Lordship to know how much he is obliged to you, and how much he shall be obliged, by any suggestions you may be kind enough to honour him

with in confidence for the public service. He immediately recommended Lord Hawkesbury to send a circular to the counties; and he is quite persuaded with half the zeal and intelligence which your Lordship has displayed, the additional two months to prepare lists would have been wholly unnecessary. It is however conceived, that government has no power, if it had the disposition, of granting any further extension in point of time.

The intelligence from Ireland is that the parishes are employed in raising money, and the colonels helping them to recruit. An advance from the Treasury would have been conciliating.

On the whole, the measure has gone on pretty well—near 17,000 already enlisted.

As to news here, it is rumoured that the government of Portugal is sincere with us and decided. We have reason to believe that our having failed with the Porte is not true, as stated in the foreign papers. There is nothing official from St. Petersburg; the last vessel which left it on the 25th ult., was informed by Mr. Booker, the broker, that there was to be an embargo on English shipping the next day; this is the whole of the intelligence which is arrived. I had a friend in the vessel.

I am ever, my dear Lord, with the truest respect,

Your Lordship's most faithful servant.

E. Cooke.

The produce of the revenue for the last quarter is extraordinary: about £15,000,000, the war taxes 6,126,000—at the rate of £24,500,000 a year. This quarter is, in general, a bad quarter of produce, but a good one for surplus.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Nov. 23, 1807.

My dearest Brother,

I have received your kind and affectionate letter. This evening

I have a letter from Tom mentioning your concurrence in a recommendation that I should write immediately to the new Lord Grey,* to urge that George Ponsonby may be brought forward as our ostensible leader in the House of Commons. I feel an invincible repugnance to this step, and I write this to you as I think it very possible from his letter, that my answer will no longer find him with you.

My objections shortly are:—Firstly. That a leader of an Opposition cannot be chosen and appointed as a leader of a government party may, and that all the elections in the world would not have made Wyndham or Sheridan leaders of the old Opposition while Fox was alive. In opposition, people will follow, like hounds, (according to Lord Bolingbroke's simile,) the man who shews them game.

Secondly. That if the choice did depend on us, although I incline on the whole to think George Ponsonby would do the best, I do not know enough of him to pledge myself so decidedly to him as I should by such a step as that of making him, by my interference, the leader of our united army; and that I think there is some ground to hesitate between him and Lord Henry Petty.

But thirdly, that I do not feel sure enough that our army is an united army, to think things ripe to proceed to the choice of a new general. I had great confidence in Lord Howick's principles, temper, and management, yet I am not sure that even he would not in the next Session have very far outrun my ideas of what duty to the country will permit at such a dreadful crisis as that to which we are now brought. On the Copenhagen business, I imagine we are likely to differ from him, perhaps I individually may differ less from him than you and my brother do; but still, I doubtless, shall differ in some degree, be the case of government what it may, and if that case should turn out better than I expect, I should then differ from him widely indeed.

* Lord Howick succeeded his father, who died on the 14th of November.

But Lord Howick being gone, I have no conception that the Opposition in the House of Commons can, by any other person whatever, be kept within many degrees of those limits which I should prescribe to myself.

You know me too well to ascribe this feeling, as many will, to a desire to reconcile myself with the present Ministers, whose system I abhor, and whose talents I despise.

But I am alarmed beyond all power of expression at the state of the country, both internal and external. Nothing seemed wanting to complete the full measure of our danger, but the last orders in Council, which have given to Bonaparte's decrees an operation and effect which we only could have given to them.

What is to be the consequence? How is our revenue to be supported; and how is our people to subsist? What is the prospect of the winter which is before us, and how are we to find authority either in government, or in parliament, to stem the tide of discontent which such misery must produce?

To these questions and many such, I can find no satisfactory answer, and I dare not trust myself in such a moment to act only on those feelings of public indignation which the conduct of these Ministers ought to excite in the mind of every honest man. I know I can do no good, and I would not willingly aggravate the evil.

These are my reasons for deciding, at least, to pause on the step recommended to me. Another fortnight will now bring me, however reluctantly, to the scene of our distempered politics. I shall then be within reach of personal communication with you and my brother, and with any others with whom we may, after deliberate consideration, think it right to communicate.

That some mischief is brewing on the side of Russia, cannot be doubted. You will observe that the treaty of Tilsit has never yet been published, and it can be kept back only on our account, or on that of Turkey.

I am glad you have, in some degree, redeemed the honour of

your country by your hospitality towards Louis XVIII., though I fear you have fixed upon yourself the burthen of no little trouble and expense. The conduct of Ministers, first in their brutal treatment of him, and next in publishing paragraphs against him in their daily libels, is worthy only of themselves.

EARL BATHURST TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Thursday Morning.

My dear Lord,

I came to town on Tuesday morning, and have not had it in my power to answer your Lordship's letter before this morning. Our objects respecting Admiral Berkeley are the same —to prevent, if possible, his return at the worst season of the year, and prevent him, if consistent with his honour, from so committing himself as to make it neither creditable to him or the government to employ him again. The delay which has attended Sir J. Warren's departure, offers undoubtedly some facility in this respect; and Lord Mulgrave is to write a letter to the Admiral, allowing him to detain at Bermuda the frigate which is to convey him home, as long as he may judge it convenient either for his health, or the arrangement of his own affairs.

Mr. Rose's mission may terminate immediately, or lead to some length. In the first case, the question will be long over in parliament before he can arrive. In the second, there is some chance certainly, that he may come in time for the discussion, and in that case he must take a part. With respect to all other discussions, if he is in England and not employed, it is by no means desirable that he should absent himself from parliament, in my opinion; but in voting with his friends, there is no necessity for his taking so active a part, as would make it discreditable for him afterwards to accept a military situation.

On the subject of the Jamaica station, your Lordship seems to have very much misunderstood me, if you imagine that I had particularly applied for that situation. The fact is, that it is one which did not occur to me, or to the Duke of Richmond before you mentioned it; and I have not even now mentioned it to the Duke. I will tell you fairly, that I am afraid to apply for it, because I know *her* family would be alarmed at the idea of her going there; but certainly without much reason, for women do not suffer from the climate. But at the time, when it was once in agitation, or rather in idea, I remember a medical person to whom I spoke, told me that he thought it would be much more alarming for the Admiral, with his full habit, than for her. If this situation was mentioned to me, I would not refuse it for him; but I feel some reluctance in pressing, what may be attended with melancholy circumstances. If, however, upon a full consideration of all the circumstances, you think it a very desirable situation, I will certainly mention it. I have been interrupted more than once in writing this letter, but I am unwilling to defer any longer answering that of your Lordship, which was written with so much frankness and kind disposition, that I should be unwilling to appear inattentive to it.

I am, my dear Lord,
Ever faithfully yours,
BATHURST.

THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM TO EARL BATHURST.

Stowe, Nov. 25, 1807.

MY DEAR LORD BATHURST,

You will easily believe the anxiety with which I have considered fully the situation of our brother, George Berkeley, and the whole of our discussions respecting him. I am most unaffectedly very unhappy to have misunderstood you on the point which I

had considered so far settled in your view of the subject, as to offer the means of assisting him by our advice on a matter so deeply interesting to him, to his dear wife, and to both of us. But as this appears to have been wholly misconceived by me, I really feel that I owe to you many apologies (not of ceremonious form, but of substance) for having trespassed, in consequence of that misconception, so much upon your time. I shall write by my friend Sir J. Warren to him, and shall certainly press him to avail himself of Lord Mulgrave's attention to your suggestions, by which the frigate is left at his disposal at Bermuda, so as to ensure to dear Lady Emily, every advantage both of time and of convenience. And I most anxiously hope that he may on that account so far protract his stay, as to keep him out of the discussion on the American question, which will, I think, under any circumstances of Mr. Rose's negotiation, be terminated before the month of March; and I am in hopes that we may urge the Admiral, from considerations of her health, to delay his voyage from Bermuda till late in February, particularly if Warren does not sail till the 20th December—and I see so many political reasons that may make it wise for government so to detain Warren, till they can judge further on some of the important points now pending, that I am inclined to hope that what I wish, from motives personal to Berkeley, may in reality take place from considerations of a very different description. Our objects for him are the same, and if upon his return he should feel it necessary to take a strong political part, I own that I shall see it with regret; but my greatest anxiety in that case will be to show him that he has lost nothing of his ground by the delay, which, from various reasons, I have certainly endeavoured to procure for him. What his views may then be, I do not guess, and, indeed, God only knows under the tremendous storm blackening round us, what the state of the country itself may be at the period in question; viz., this day four months. I have gradually suffered myself to be drawn on by my anxious thoughts,

respecting Berkeley, to the gloomy picture that haunts me, but for obvious reasons, I break off by assuring you that

I am, my dear Lord,

Very truly and faithfully yours,

N. B.

The clouds appear to thicken around England; apparently, so much so, as to prevent the government from seeing their way. It is impossible to estimate too highly, the moderation and forbearance towards them of Lord Grenville, and the motives which induced this line of conduct. Their measures may probably have seemed to the Whigs extremely provoking; but, for reasons that did him infinite honour, he sternly set his face against exhibitions of party violence—which, indeed, we are bound to state, he never could be brought to encourage. The state of the Opposition, at this period, is also minutely described.

MR. T. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Cleveland Square, Nov. 30, 1807.

My dearest Brother,

To the enclosed letter from Mr. Bedingfield, I wrote for answer that, agreeably to his request, I would forward the papers to you, but that I could not encourage him in any expectation that you would feel this subject as a matter that individually referred to you; the circumstances of the case being entirely of a public description, and now of a pretty remote date. Why does not Perceval give him a better place, if he thinks his services deserving of remuneration?

La Chatre told James yesterday that the royal visit to Stowe is become uncertain, as they are all astounded by a letter of Lord Hawkesbury to Monsieur yesterday, to express from the Cabinet

their desire that Louis XVIII will not think of taking any residence nearer than fifty miles from London. This looks like negotiation going on, and probably under the mediation of Petersburgh.

I have a letter from William, to say that he shall not move till about the middle of next week. He does not think that there can be dependance enough to warrant him writing the letter which we had talked of, as he does not know the proposed person well enough to adopt him for such a situation. In truth, no more do I; but the evil is that there is nobody who can be entirely trusted. Lord Holland writes to press Lord Howick [Grey] to come up to give up the red ribbon, and to talk *de summâ rerum*; but I think he will hardly come before he comes to the meeting.

The King is said to be out of humour with Louis XVIII; and there are rumours that he is making up to Lord Sidmouth. If this is true, depend upon it, it arises from his being pressed by the Primate and, perhaps, some of his present Ministers, to do some *little* grace to his Irish subjects.

Lord Grenville is very eager about tithes. I have no objection, but I have no faith in any real good, short of conciliating the whole body of Catholics. We cannot fight France, Europe, and Ireland.

MR. T. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Dec. 9, 1807.

MY DEAREST BROTHER,

I have a letter to-day from Lord Grenville—he writes in very deep despair about the state of public affairs, and the tremendous danger that hangs round the country; and I confess that my thoughts upon the subject are not less gloomy than his. The magnitude of the danger as to the existence of the country, absorbs all the minor considerations of political arrangements and parties; and I see that Lord Grenville is even more reluctant than I am to believe that any real good can now be done by any party in parliament. Who is to be the leader of any

opposition, is a consideration which employs the thoughts of all our politicians in town.

Tierney has received yesterday a letter from Lord Howick, to say that Whitbread has just left Northumberland, and is very intently determined upon some measure in parliament for peace, a measure upon which Lord Howick professes to differ from Whitbread, and to agree with Lord Milton's language to his Yorkshiremen. Lord Howick so much dislikes this of Whitbread, that he says he should not easily persuade himself to move, but would still be induced to do so, if Ponsonby can take the lead, which he thinks best. Lord Holland certainly is of opinion rather with Whitbread on the subject of peace, and is more inclined to Lord H. Petty for a leader than to Ponsonby, although he admits that Lord H. Petty could hardly suffice for the lead at present. Tierney is with Lord Howick and us on the subject of peace, and is ready for any leader that shall have the most general concurrence. He thinks Ponsonby might be the best, but he is afraid our country gentlemen will not like an Irish leader.

The Duke of Bedford has offered Tavistock to G. Ponsonby, but is a little angry at not having any answer. He says Ponsonby is unpopular in Ireland; and Lord W. Russell tells him that Ponsonby will not go down.

Anstruther tells Tierney that Ponsonby is too great a stranger. If so, what can be done? I wrote yesterday to Ponsonby to thank him for a very flattering letter, with expressions of his entire confidence in our family, and to tell him, that my health not allowing me to take much part in business in the House, I had little voice on the present occasion; that the general wish must determine the leader, and that I should be very glad if he should appear to possess that general good opinion which I personally entertained of him. There are, however, so many points of difference afloat, besides the real difficulties of the want of a leader, that I should almost be inclined to think, with

Lord Grenville, that no good can be done, and that we must sink into ruin, with our eyes open to it; and yet that is not the usual and natural state of my mind in other times. What will be the end?

Austria is upon the point of breaking with us, and Stahrenberg told me yesterday that he expects very soon to join his wife at Brussels. He offered Austrian mediation, and asked satisfaction for Copenhagen. The answer stated, that the King was always desirous of peace, but saw no present hope of it. Stahrenberg then wrote to Paris to ask if they had any propositions to offer; he daily expects an answer in the negative, and I presume he will then quit London, and Austria will then rank with our enemies. Sir J. Moore is gone with all the troops except 7000 men, as I believe to Sardinia, which we are to occupy instead of Sicily, that from French intrigues, and the unpopularity of the King of Naples, is thought no longer tenable to us; but I have great doubts whether the neighbourhood of Corsica will not make Sardinia as little secure to us as Sicily.

The Duke of Portland holds his place. Lord Wellesley will have nothing unless he has everything. What a lamentable and helpless state!

P.S. I have had no answer from Lauderdale.

MR. T. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Cleveland Square, Dec. 11, 1807.

My dearest Brother,

You will have been aware that one of the greatest difficulties which attended the nomination of Ponsonby, was the ill-humour which was to be apprehended from Whitbread, and the probability of his being driven into separate measures of peace, &c., distinctly from the rest of Opposition; you, who were as much impressed as myself with the belief that the only chance now rested upon Ponsonby, you will be glad to hear that the main difficulties

respecting him appear to be a good deal subdued. Whitbread came up yesterday to see Tierney, and authorized him to say, that he, Whitbread, was ready to act as cordially with Ponsonby as he had with Lord Howick, reserving only such opinions as he had felt himself obliged to deliver even when Lord Howick was in office; he said he would not take any step whatever to excite petitions for peace in the two counties where his property is, but that if meetings were called on this subject, he must then think it his duty to attend them, and to hold then a very different language from that of Lord Milton; upon the whole, therefore, he professes to go on now as he did last Session, which is all that could be expected from him.

George Ponsonby has written to thank the Duke of Bedford for Tavistock, and the Duke is now persuaded that George Ponsonby will be the best person to try. I continue to incline to this opinion, although I see so many difficulties, that I cannot express myself sanguinely on the matter; indeed, my only present desire is that the whole army should not be disbanded for want of a leader, but I am daily more and more apprehensive that the difference of opinion on peace, perhaps on Copenhagen, and perhaps on America, besides the objectionable course of last year's debate, which will probably be renewed in this—all these points of difference, to which is to be added Ponsonby's eagerness for actively promoting the Catholic question in Ireland, though many of his friends are inclined to hold it back; all these important points of difference promise so little, if any, possible public advantage from parliamentary war, that even if I were disposed to attend, I should much hesitate upon the expediency of so doing; but my own attendance being out of the question, I am of course anxious upon these subjects in reference only to you and Lord Grenville, and to the chance, if any yet is left, of safety for the country. As to the question of Ponsonby, I have said to Lord Holland and Tierney, that if the general opinion is in favour of Ponsonby, I have reason to believe that you and Lord Gren-

ville, and Lord Temple, would not have any objection, but I have repeated to them, that we have none of us any personal knowledge of him, and that much important discussion must be had of the course to be taken, if any can be taken with advantage. Be so good as to shew this letter to Lord Temple, and let me hear what both your opinions are.

MR. T. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Cleveland Square, Dec. 18, 1807.

My dearest Brother,

I do not by any means approve of the imperative tone of the Irish meeting which pronounces that Lord Grenville *shall* present the petition to the House; and I feel this the more, because they seem to think themselves as much entitled to the support of their English friends, while they are acting in defiance of our advice and opinions, as they could be if they had our previous consent to any, or all, of the measures they have adopted. Added to this, is the question of the veto, their acquiescence in which two years ago made a great feature in their case, inasmuch as it furnished some facilities here towards removing the prejudices which so powerfully and so generally prevail in this country. Several of our friends attach so much importance to this veto, as to make it an absolute condition of their support; and as far as I can as yet form any judgment, I incline to think that, without the veto, it would be found utterly impossible to reconcile the public mind to it, even if one could be quite sure that one ought to reconcile one's own mind to it. On the other hand, there is the growing fear that, by the shameful abandonment of their former pledge to the veto, Milner and others may now have inflamed their own Irish Church upon this topic, so as to render it irrecoverable.

This fear, however, must have its due boundaries, and we must not act foolishly and improvidently in this country, in the fear that they will act wickedly and desperately in Ireland. This

is the present colour of my mind; and when I write to you, it is as if I thought aloud.

The following intelligence proceeds from a private source, whence the Marquis of Buckingham, as will be seen, received important information of a strictly confidential nature. The significance of the departure of the Royal Family of Portugal, was not exaggerated. It formed the first of an important chain of events, that had immense influence upon the prosperity of this country. The subsequent communications convey much interesting information respecting the state and prospects of the Whig party.

London, Dec. 19, 1807.

Everything that I wrote to you respecting the health of that person is strictly true; but I do not hear of his having any disposition to quit—on the contrary. I have not seen Sydenham to-day, but every second man I have met, has told me that Hawkesbury and Castlereagh are out; indeed, the rumour that there is a division in the government, entirely prevails. I trust in God it may be so, as news is brought by the 'Phœbe' this day, which would be the very trump-card these people have wanted: —the departure of the Prince of Brazil for South America, with the royal family, the treasury, church plate, and 17,000 troops, embarked in seven sail-of-the-line, and five large frigates, together with about twenty sail of Brazilmen; to this force, Sir Sydney has added four British men-of-war, to convoy them safe—is confirmed. There are left in the Tagus nine sail of Russian ships, quite foul, and in no state for sea; three old Portuguese hulks, and one Portuguese ship of the line they would have wished to have brought away.

I had the above from Cooke, who is mightily elated at the news. He says, before they embarked, the guns of the different batteries were spiked, and rendered useless; and that 2000 Dragoons of the enemy had entered Lisbon almost at the moment—the Grand Army, under Junot, being within twenty miles of the capital. Sir Sydney is cruizing off the Tagus, with five sail-of-the-line only. But ships are sending out to him in every direction.

Such is the real state of the transaction, which is certainly, altogether, a most fortunate event for England, if not a glorious one. Cooke says it has been a matter of the greatest nicety, and has been managed by Lord S. with infinite address. But to the last the Prince was wavering, until prevailed upon by the "Pope's nuncio," who has been the great friend of the English government upon this occasion, and without whom all would have been lost. I told Cooke the reports of their disunion, &c., upon which he declared, upon his honour, everything was concord, harmony, &c., &c., in the government; that the Duke of Portland much better; Lord Castlereagh recovered entirely; and the King as well as ever he was in his life!

Brazil is now to take away all our manufactures, to supply our navy with timber, our West Indies with lumber and provisions; in short, the real El Dorado. And whereas had we sent a large force, and attempted to bully and bluster, we should have thrown them into the hands of the French, and never have entered the Tagus. In short, that it has been a master-piece of adroitness and good management.

All the papers abound with notices of Louis the XVIII's journey to Stowe, and of his arrival at Wanstead; of which, being completely ignorant, I could say nothing.

Your Lordship will receive the counter-declaration against—printed this day in a Gazette Extraordinary, with great ostentation. The funds I understand have risen, and are likely to rise still more upon this occasion.

MR. T. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Dropmore, Dec. 25, 1807.

MY DEAREST BROTHER,

Elliot and I have found my brother very strongly of opinion that no good can be done in parliament by a renewal of the disgraceful and disgusting recriminating debates which took place last Session, to the entire delight of Mr. Cobbett alone, but to the entire discredit of all public men of every description and character. You know that I have, literally speaking, no hope of safety for the country as long as we continue to give Ireland to our enemies in order to enable them to attack England; my own opinion, therefore, inclines to think that it is very immaterial what is done by any party as long as this remains undone by the King's government; but if the party of Opposition can be ever again made useful, it must be by their acquiring the respect and good opinion of the public, by conducting themselves with unusual temper and moderation, in times of very unusual public danger. I am glad to find this to be very strongly Elliot's opinion, as well as Lord Carlisle's, and Lord Stafford's; but as it is necessary that no time should be lost in communicating with the other wing of the army, Lord Grenville has written to Lauderdale and Lord Grey, to desire them to come up as early as their convenience will admit, in order thoroughly to talk over the line that is to be pursued—suggesting to both of them at the same time, the inclination of his opinion in favour of his expressing in parliament his entire disapprobation of the formation, and of the measures of the present government; but abstaining from a harrassing course of daily opposition, which can be of no use either to the public or to the party.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Dropmore, Dec. 25, 1807.

Lord Temple will have told you all that has been passing respecting the lead in the House of Commons, which now seems settled in Ponsonby, as far as it can be said that the lead is settled at all, of an army which appears to me but too likely to have different enemies in view, and to pursue different modes of warfare against them.

My own impression strongly leads me to think, that in the extreme of danger into which the country is now brought, the ordinary struggle of an opposition campaign in parliament neither becomes us, nor is what the public would endure; and this even if the battles were confined to such objects and modes of warfare, as in other circumstances I should myself approve. Much less can we, as I think, be parties to anything at all resembling a repetition of the scenes exhibited in the last Session of parliament, from which I retired in disgust, but which, if again recurred to, must oblige me (supposing I am then in the habit of attending parliament at all,) to express my utter aversion from them.

I do not believe that Grey and Lord Lauderdale, whom I desired to come to town sooner, can come before the 15th or 16th, which was the time they had fixed. Of course, if they came, I must meet them there and endeavour to reconcile them to a line of conduct which may perhaps not be quite suited to their wishes, though I am confident they will do me too much justice to attribute it to any desire of falling in with the system of the Court and ministers of the present day.

The necessity of keeping myself disengaged to meet them when they come, will I fear make it impossible for me to go to Stowe after the Royal visit, and while that infliction continues, you would have no leisure to discuss these points. I should, however,

much wish to know what you think upon them, as I have stated nothing of them except to Tom and Elliot, and to Grey and Lauderdale in a very general way.

I still hope we may continue to have a talk on all this before the scene opens.

I hear nothing more of the news Lord T. brought down here, except that the anxiety with which the "Courier" contradicts it, inclines me to think that there must have been a good deal of foundation for the story.

MR. W. H. FREMANTLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Englefield Green, Dec. 31, 1807,

MY DEAR LORD,

I have been at Dropmore for the last two days; of course you know the intended arrangement about G. Ponsonby becoming our leader. He is certainly, under all the circumstances, the best, and the most likely to reconcile all parties; and his having been Chancellor of Ireland, and a Cabinet Minister, gives him every pretension, independent of his talents, and his long practice in parliamentary debate. It is certainly not very pleasant to feel that the House of Commons is now led by two lawyers; and it may probably disgust many of our country gentlemen; but if Ponsonby displays abilities, which I have no doubt he will do, it will soon reconcile them to it. Tierney and Adam were to be at Dropmore to-day; the former is eager for Ponsonby; and in my opinion this is material, as I am most anxious to attach Tierney (who, I know, is most willing to attach himself), to your friends.

I have not had an opportunity of knowing your opinions upon the variety of measures which the government have adopted since the Copenhagen business, with respect to their Orders in Council, I mean those which relate to the blockade of France. I take it for granted your Lordship sees them in the light Lord Grenville

does, which is that of their folly and imbecility, and of their leading exactly to the object Bonaparte would most wish to promote, namely, the annihilation of our trade and commerce in Europe. You see by the papers to-day, Sir J. Moore is arrived with forty transports at St. Helens—conceive the government having transmitted counter orders to this force to remain in Sicily, which arrived two days after they had sailed, and upon its arrival at Gibraltar they found no duplicates of these despatches, upon which Sir J. Moore was obliged to go off instantly to learn from Sir Sidney, or somebody off the Tagus, what was intended to be done; and finding he could gain no intelligence, he returned to Gibraltar and immediately sailed, and, as it appears by the papers, with the whole of his force, consisting of upwards of forty transports. I learnt this from Lady Matilda Wynyard, whom I met on the road in my way from Dropmore yesterday, and who had received a letter from her husband, who commands the guards, acquainting her of it. It does appear a most extraordinary act to evacuate Sicily at the very moment when Bonaparte is in that quarter of the globe, preparing probably an attack against it. This, together with the evacuation of Alexandria at the same period, seem to be the acts of perfect madness. The state of Ireland you probably know much more of than I do, but by what I learn, it is in the most alarming and dangerous ferment; and this is a point in which I know your Lordship feels the danger infinitely greater than all objects whatever.

The finance is held forth as flourishing—the excess of the property tax (though it is very little beyond what it was taken at in the last budget,) they say will cover the excess in the calculation of our expenditure, by the different enterprises which have been undertaken at Copenhagen and elsewhere. They are to borrow five millions, it is said, from the Bank without interest, and they have some scheme about Exchequer Bills or government securities, by which they are not to create fresh burthens upon the people. The sum wanted, it is said, will be twelve millions.

You may be assured that a difference of opinion existed in the Cabinet upon the subject of Ireland, and which gave much uneasiness in my neighbourhood; but it is gone by, probably seeing that these places were endangered by it. Your very noble and generous hospitality to the poor French King, is the subject of great admiration. I do assure you, I have repeatedly heard it spoken of in terms of the highest applause; and it undoubtedly is a marked contrast to the indignities and want of common decency which he has experienced, not only from the government, but from all quarters. It is a subject, as you may well suppose, highly unpopular in this neighbourhood. I hear the Duke of Norfolk supports government; I hope it is not true. Have you any reason to imagine it from his language in the summer? I think you mentioned his having been at Stowe. I shall go to town on the 16th. I suppose the French Court will prevent your Lordship being there at the meeting. Probably our committee will be formed in about a fortnight afterwards. I shall see Adam, and do everything in my power to give it aid; but I trust to receiving your commands about it, long before the period arrives. The King's eyes continue much the same, and his habits of indolence increase daily. It is with much difficulty he is persuaded to take his usual ride; and indeed this does not happen now above twice a week. My nephew is this day arrived here from Monte Video, having landed at Cork, where he left Gower and Murray waiting for further orders.

Ever with great respect and gratitude,

W. H. F.

The Berlin decree of the 21st November, 1806, and Napoleon's famous Milan decrees of November 23, and December 17, 1807, by which he vainly endeavoured to annihilate British commerce, were replied to by the English government with Orders in Council, dated

severally the 7th of January, and the 11th of November, 1807, prohibiting—firstly, vessels from trading between ports in or under the dominion of France, from which English vessels had been excluded; secondly, declaring a blockade of the ports and places of France, and her allies; and all ships or cargoes, the produce or manufacture of such countries, with certain specified exceptions, intended for trade, lawful prizes to his Majesty's ships of war. The wisdom of these manifestoes was disputed at the time, by some of our ablest statesmen; and Lord Grenville, in his place in parliament, denounced them as impolitic and mischievous. That any benefit to this country was derived from them, may be questioned. That they irritated neutrals, and exasperated enemies, is indisputable; and the current excuse for them, the necessity of retaliation, was not more just in fact, than in principle. Napoleon's decrees, like his bulletins, were manufactured for home circulation, to impress upon those who could know no better, the predominance of France, and the importance of the Emperor. All his apparently crushing edicts against his resolute enemy, out of his dominions proved invariably as harmless as the favourite epithets, brigands, hideous leopards, shopkeepers, &c., &c., which he lavished upon England, both with the imperial pen and tongue.

1808

THE EXPEDITION TO PORTUGAL—SIR ARTHUR WELLESLEY AND THE CONVENTION OF CINTRA—STATE OF IRELAND—COMPLAINTS AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT—SIR JOHN MOORE'S EXPEDITION TO SPAIN.

GLOOMY as had been the dawn of the previous years, that of 1808 appeared blacker by many degrees. A conviction seemed to have taken root on the continent, that Napoleon was irresistible; and after he had terminated a successful campaign against the Russians, by the treaty of Tilsit, in which the two Emperors settled their quarrel by an arrangement that left each free to follow out his own ambitious projects, the destruction of England looked inevitable. It is true, that our formidable neighbour made professions of peace, but so worded, as to be a studied insult. Nothing could be more distant from his thoughts, than sentiments of amity towards anything English; and, therefore, the mockery of a desire for peace with the people and government of England, passed on our side the channel for what it was worth.

About this time, while this nation was carefully increasing

its means of defence, and preparing to act on the offensive when a favourable opportunity should present itself, Napoleon, by one of those great intrigues which formed the chief feature of his policy, dispossessed the Spanish Bourbons of their sovereignty, and conferred it on his brother Joseph. A celebrated political character, has left an account of these proceedings, differing widely from those that had hitherto been considered most trustworthy; but, in acknowledging the Queen of Spain as his authority, it would appear as though he had greatly lessened the value of his statements.* It is not necessary here to enter into the amount of culpability incurred by the different members of the Spanish royal family in these transactions. There is space only for the fact, that the Emperor of France contrived to turn them out of the country, and take possession of it as completely as he had taken possession of the neighbouring kingdom of Portugal.

The most sagacious politicians in Great Britain, regarded the proceedings of the English government during the progress of this transfer, with deep dissatisfaction. The recent expedition to the Baltic, was severely criticised in and out of parliament; and Lord Grenville, among others, publicly recorded his condemnation of it, as discreditable to our arms. An impression was beginning to gain ground, that we were about to be overwhelmed by the incalculable resources of our formidable opponent, and that we possessed no military leader, in whom we could place confidence in the impending struggle. During the

* Foreign Reminiscences. By Henry Richard, Lord Holland. 1850.

animated debates in the House of Commons, on the condition and prospects of the country, a member sat on one of the back benches, who rarely spoke, except on some subject connected with a subordinate office held by him in the sister kingdom. No one appeared to entertain an idea, that the unpretending, and unobtrusive member for the English borough of Rye, was destined to enter the lists with the European Colossus, whose strides in the path of conquest was checked only by the element that circumscribed the pride of Canute, and provoked the folly of Xerxes. If any one referred to him, it was as an officer who had recently distinguished himself in the service of the East India Company. A few may have talked of Assaye, perhaps others remembered brilliant achievements gained by him in the same distant quarter of the globe; but no one ventured then to couple his name with the hero of Marengo, of Austerlitz, and of more than a score of other brilliant victories. In truth, there were some who spoke of him as a military adventurer, who owed his position to the influence of his brother; and as that brother had recently been the object of a threatened impeachment, for various alleged high crimes and misdemeanours, he necessarily shared the disgrace of this imputed criminality. Hence came the derogatory title of the "Sepoy General," which, subsequently, found an unworthy echo across the channel. Such opinions, however, must have been shared by very few indeed of his countrymen. The government had recognized his talent, by affording him employment; and his brother's spirited defence of their Copenhagen expedition, in which this

able officer had held a command, entitled both to their gratitude.

The Session of 1808, commenced early in the year; and, for some time, stormy debates succeeded each other, in which the administrative sins of omission and commission, perpetrated by the government, became a fruitful source of declamation. The Ministry, however, proved too strong to be affected by such assaults. The more they were abused, apparently, the higher became their majorities; and, notwithstanding imputed grave mistakes, and serious shortcomings, the parliamentary reputation of Lord Castlereagh, and Mr. Canning, gave the government increased influence.

Public differences were occasionally varied, by the interchange of civilities between members of the opposite parties. In this way, originated the apparent confidence which makes a prominent feature in the following communications. The proposal to which the first was a reply, was an offer to serve abroad, with his regiment of militia, "the Royal Bucks."

VISCOUNT CASTLEREAGH TO EARL TEMPLE.

St. James's Square, July 12, 1808.

My dear Lord,

I beg very sincerely to thank you for the flattering mark of your confidence, which you have conferred on me, by making me the confidential depositary of your feelings and disposition, should the present interesting crisis lead to their being brought forward with prospect of a result correspondent to the very honourable spirit that dictates them.

I cannot better endeavour to justify the trust you have re-

posed in me, than by adhering very literally and faithfully to your injunctions; and you may rely, my dear Lord, that I shall not fail to give you the earliest intimation of making a more public avowal of your sentiments, if I should see an opening which appears to me propitious to their being realized; and I think it due to you to assure you, that you are fully entitled to consider yourself as having the first claim to an intimation of this nature, as far as I am concerned.

Believe me, my dear Lord,
Ever faithfully yours,
CASTLEREAGH.

VISCOUNT CASTLEREAGH TO EARL TEMPLE.

Stanmore Park, Aug. 1, 1808.

MY DEAR LORD,

Your letter anticipated one from me, perhaps unnecessary, after my former communication, to say, that the two or three corps, that had offered to serve abroad, had done so, without concert or communication with government; indeed, the only knowledge I as yet have of the fact, is from the newspapers. As you have now acted upon your original purpose, and released me from my obligation of secrecy, I shall feel myself at liberty to inform my colleagues of the motives which prevented you from being the first to set the example.

As you have been kind enough to appoint me your gamekeeper in this neighbourhood, can you tell me how far my jurisdiction extends?

Yours, my dear Lord,
Very faithfully &c.,
CASTLEREAGH.

The ideas expressed in the next communication are characterised by the usual impulsiveness and confidence

of youth; nevertheless, they convey correct representations of the working of the complicated mechanism of government. Earl Temple was admitted to the confidence of the Prince of Wales, and was intimate with the leaders of the two great parties; he had opportunities therefore of hearing all the confidential gossip of a political character, circulated in such circles—opportunities it is evident he did not neglect. At the commencement, the writer refers to the second Copenhagen expedition.

EARL TEMPLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Pall Mall, Monday.

My dear Father,

There is no news stirring, but a great deal of expectation. The general idea is, that Gambier is gone to offer the protection of the British fleet to the Danes, and to prevent the French from sending troops across the Belt. If our protection is refused, we then are to seize the fleet, &c., &c. Bonaparte has offered his protection, too; and if that is refused, threatens the Danes with the loss of Holstein. If this is a correct statement, I have no doubt that the Danes will prefer French and Russian protection to ours, accompanied with the loss of Holstein; and then our Ministers will have had the merit of furnishing at once to the Northern powers] the only thing they want, which is a sufficient excuse for re-establishing the Northern confederacy against us.

This is wise, as we have already so little upon our hands. The other expedition is said to be gone to occupy the Isle of Walcheren. If so, its object is as wise as the other. Do they suppose that the French will quietly leave them in possession (if they get possession) of the Isle of Walcheren, separated as it is from the main, only by a very narrow channel, and unsupported as our troops will be? The enemy at peace with the

continent, will have nothing to distract their attention from driving us from the Scheldt. If 20,000 troops will not attain that object, 300,000 may. Antwerp is supposed to be full of troops, and to be fully prepared also against us.

The Prince of Wales told me last night, that he understood there was a private article in the treaty between Russia and France, by which Prussia is to be called upon for three millions pounds sterling, and that till that sum is paid, the Prussian territories are not to be evacuated by the French troops. There appears every reason to believe that Bonaparte will immediately offer us peace through the mediation of Russia; and that Hanover, Osnaburgh, &c., are to be offered to us in exchange for the conquered colonies. Hanover will be a valuable acquisition to us now.

We are, at this moment, amply provided with diplomatic talents at the Russian Court, and they are employed as follows: Lord Hutchinson finding his mission over, is gone to Moscow upon a tour of pleasure. Lord Douglas finding his mission over, is gone upon his long-tailed horse to Moscow, upon a tour of pleasure. And Lord Granville Leveson, finding his mission not begun, is following the Emperor of Russia, not acknowledged, nor received, waiting for instructions from hence. A*****, the Russian Minister here, has not had one word of communication from his Court for the last six weeks—and so ends the history of our relations with Russia, and of our "intimate connection with the continent."

From what I have collected since my stay in town, I have no doubt whatever that Ministers are completely disunited. Canning complains that he is a cypher, and the report is, that he is leaving his office for the Admiralty. The Prince told me he thought Wellesley was certainly coming in, either in the place of the Duke of Portland (who is very ill) or of Canning of the Foreign Office; and he said he was convinced Wellesley would immediately make an attempt to disunite the Opposition,

and to bring Lord Grenville in. He further said, that Wellesley had latterly been trying to pay great court at Carleton House, but I see plainly he has made no progress. The Prince's politics continue perfectly right, and his language against the Ministers is more violent than ever. The cry in the navy against the appointments in the Baltic fleet, is quite as violent as we heard at Stowe that it was.

The situation of Ireland is daily becoming more unpleasant. The north and the south are flirting with each other, and the Orangemen and the Catholics are holding the language of the necessity of forgetting old animosities for the purpose of regaining their rights and liberties. The Orange Lodges of the County of Down, published an address the other day, in which they say that in the present state of affairs they will not celebrate the Battle of the Boyne, and their other Orange festivals, which would only tend to irritate the minds of the Catholics, at a moment when union was so desirable; and this was immediately answered by a long paragraph in the "Dublin Evening Post," requesting the Catholics to forget and forgive all they had suffered from the Orangemen, as the time was approaching when unanimity would be absolutely necessary. All this which appears most fair to the eye, only covers a most foul and dangerous sore. The union and unanimity talked of here, mean separation from this country, and nothing less. At the dinner, which the Catholics gave Dr. Milner in Dublin the other day, where two hundred people dined, the general conversation at the lower end of the table (not the top) run upon the necessity of having county meetings to petition parliament for the repeal of the Act of Union. Dillon is going over to call a meeting of his county for that purpose, and if the example is set, I am certain it will run like wildfire.

Such is the state of Ireland, such are the times in which it is in that state, and such are the Ministers who are to direct our councils in these circumstances!

I am going to the House of Commons this evening, where we

are to have a debate upon the report of the Militia Bill. I shall probably not leave town till Wednesday, and to-morrow will write to you again.

As military operations on an extensive scale were in contemplation, which it was believed would be directed upon Spain, where a violently hostile feeling to their French invaders prevailed amongst the population, applications from amateur soldiers, like the one mentioned in the following letter, became matters of course. It appears to have been thought perfectly reasonable for a volunteer in the position of Lord Ebrington, to look for the honours of the profession at starting, without going through the usual routine. Earl Temple, as has already been shown, was equally desirous of military occupation in the same quarter, but then he was already a soldier, and might have entertained a claim to the same rank in the army, he had held in the militia. If the latter ought to be a nursery for our soldiers, not less so was it a nursery for our officers; and the colonel of a militia regiment, who had brought it into a state of efficiency, might very well aspire to such a recognition of his services, as would appear in his appointment to a regiment of the line.

Although the Spanish expedition excited very considerable enthusiasm in the young and adventurous portion of society, the more prudent, knowing the insufficient knowledge which had led the government to embark in so hazardous an enterprise, regarded it with distrust.

MR. T. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Boconnoc, Aug. 1, 1808.

My dearest Brother,

I arrived here yesterday from Castle Hill with Lady Williams, Harriet and Ebrington, and found everybody here impatient to ascertain the earliest chance of our seeing you in these western parts; in addition to this enquiry, I write to you by Ebrington in reference to the business which has somewhat suddenly carried him to Stowe.

He has expressed to his father and to his two uncles here, a very laudable and earnest desire to look at what is passing in the very interesting quarter of Spain and Portugal; his father and Hester, seem to see with pleasure this active curiosity, which on every account is likely to be so useful and creditable to him, and Lord Grenville and myself have been no less pleased than they are in the prospect of seeing him take, *ex mero motu suo*, a determination so becoming and honourable to him. The next thing was to look at the most practicable shape in which this could be effected, and I know nobody who could give him more useful advice and assistance on this subject, than yourself.

Had his views been confined to the mere notion of looking at the coast of Spain and Portugal, that could be easily done, and a very amusing tour might be provided for him by some naval interest, which might likewise have shown him Gibraltar, Malta and Sicily, &c., but in conversing with him, I very soon found that he has a farther and a greater object; he has a curiosity to see the military movements of a campaign, and he expresses a reluctance to approach a scene of so much interest, and which draws so much attention, both from his own country

and from Europe, without taking a more active part in it than that of an indifferent spectator, and his ideas upon this subject are of so honourable a cast, that I have no doubt you will agree with Lord Grenville and me, in wishing to give the best and the most prompt effect to them.

The situation of a volunteer is often very irksome and awkward, both for the volunteer and for the army which he follows, and on the other hand, it does not seem to be pro-dignitate, or to accord with his rank and age to join a marching regiment in the capacity of cornet or ensign, but if he could be adopted as a supernumerary aide-de-camp by any of the leading general officers, neither he nor we can see any objection to his taking a half-pay commission for the mere purpose of enabling him to be given out in orders as aide-de-camp, if that appointment could be obtained for him. On this head, your influence with Sir A. Wellesley has occurred as being, perhaps, sufficient to ensure to Ebrington the situation which he is so desirous of obtaining; with this view, Lord Grenville has given him a letter to Colonel Gordon, describing his wish to obtain such a commission as may enable him to be received as aide-de-camp by Wellesley: in case you should feel confident enough of your influence with Wellesley to give good assurance of his receiving Ebrington as a supernumerary aide-de-camp. It is conceived that General Grenville may also with propriety write to the Duke of York, and explain the object that is in question.

Ebrington will call at Butleigh to-morrow, and will probably bring you the general's letter on this subject, so that your advice to Ebrington will decide him as to the presenting the two letters to Gordon and to the Duke of York. If you have any doubt of your influence with Wellesley, or any reluctance to try it, of course all this part of the project must fall to the ground, but as neither Lord Grenville, nor I suppose it probable, that any such difficulty will occur, we are as sanguine as Ebrington in the accomplishment of this very desirable arrangement, which

cannot be too speedily carried into effect, in order to give to Ebrington the fair credit of being the first of his rank, who has stood forward in the very honourable character which will so much contribute to his fair fame and reputation.

Upon the whole of this matter, however, we both think that you are likely to furnish to him so much the best advice and assistance, that we have concurred with him in thinking that he should lose no time in consulting with you; and he is accordingly just setting forth to Stowe, having written word to his father that he has done so, and having desired his father to write to him to London. In case the military part of this project should be found practicable, and that you can ensure his reception by Wellesley, I presume that by my writing to Admiral Young at Plymouth, I shall probably be able to obtain, by his assistance, the accommodation of Ebrington's going out in the first sloop or frigate that may be sailing to the Tagus; and with the chance of his falling in with Lord Collingwood, I could, perhaps, venture to give him a letter to ensure Lord Collingwood's protection and assistance, if it should become necessary; but I have no acquaintance with General Spencer or Sir J. Moore, to both of whom it might be desirable to get letters for Ebrington, if they can be procured.

When this interesting business shall have been best settled as it will be by your advice, I rely upon your promise of letting us see you here. Why should you not come down and launch Ebrington from Plymouth, where we might meet you and return with you? I think we have good reason to be proud of Ebrington and Temple in these times of aristocratical apathy, as Mr. Cobbett would call them.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Boconnoc, August 10, 1808.

I am not, nor have I ever been, in the least degree sanguine

as to the issue of all that is going on in Spain and Portugal; on the contrary, I am persuaded that it will all end ill, and that if there were any right spirit or sense in the country, the heaviest indignation of the public would fall upon the Ministers, for the course which has been pursued from the beginning, of scandalous and systematic deception. No such feeling will, however, prevail; and, on the contrary, our good countrymen will be angry only with those who seek to undeceive them.

But I think the question of the step which Ebrington is now taking, and of that which I was so happy to see Temple take, rests upon grounds perfectly different from that of any speculations as to the ultimate success of the business. The government and the general voice of the country (misled, it is true, by the government, but still too strongly manifested to be at all doubtful) point out this enterprise as one in which the country is to embark; and, if so, nothing can be more honourable to individuals of birth and station like their's, than the disposition which they have manifested to take an active and useful part in those exertions which the country is to make on this occasion.

I trust that Ebrington's plan will not be found impracticable, because I see, in a very strong light, the preference of such a scheme over any idea of going in the very awkward and embarrassing character of a volunteer.

I have not written, and think it best not to write to Lord Wellesley. You have claims enough upon Sir Arthur to entitle you to ask much more from him than this favour, if favour it can be called, which is, in fact, an honour and distinction shown to him.

I think, therefore, we may, without any doubt, count enough upon Wellesley's acquiescence to let Ebrington proceed to him at once, if the matter of the commission can be, as I trust it may, satisfactorily arranged.

God bless you.

The rising of the population in Spain, against King Joseph, and the armies his Imperial brother had sent to support his pretensions, created great excitement in England, and the desire for intelligence of its progress, became every day more absorbing. Assistance was being sent from this country, and a considerable armament was preparing to help the enslaved nationalities of the Peninsula to regain their independence; and this gave a deeper interest to those Englishmen who were anxiously watching the struggle. The youngest son of the Marquis of Buckingham also became eager to participate in its dangers, and its honours; but his father was not inclined to consent to his views. Lord Grenville, and Mr. Thomas Grenville, as it appears, took a more favourable view of their nephew's inclinations; and strove to remove the Marquis's objections, by representing the advantage of the military service over the political. The brilliant success of the Spaniards at Baylen, gave an immense impulse to the martial ardour of this country.

Among the general officers who most distinguished themselves in the late expedition to Copenhagen, was Sir Arthur Wellesley; and, on the return of that armament, a more important field of operations was contemplated, in which it was expected, the military talents he had displayed, would find more scope. Unfortunately, the rules of the service raised stumbling blocks in his career, in the shape of the superior claims of certain senior officers to the chief command; and some of the Ministers, partly through ignorance, and partly through incapacity, raised others,

which equally affected the expedition. Nevertheless, Sir Arthur Wellesley sailed for Portugal, with the command of nearly 10,000 men, and landed, between Oporto and Lisbon, on the 1st of August, 1808; a few days later, he was joined by General Spencer, with another force of about 4000 men. With this army he marched, on the 8th, in the direction of the capital, where Marshal Junot had a much larger force. In his progress, he received a reinforcement of Portuguese regulars. On the 16th, the French, under General Delaborde, were defeated at Roliça. On the 21st, the whole force of Junot shared the same fate at Vimeira. The position of the French in Portugal, out of reach of their resources, in the midst of a hostile population, and with a victorious English army within a short distance, would soon have been not only critical, but hopeless. Nevertheless, at the very moment when the victor was preparing to follow up his success in a manner that must have placed the defeated enemy at his mercy, he was superseded; and, almost immediately, the new comer was, in his turn, obliged to give way to *his* senior.

It is not worth while now to inquire into the capabilities of Sir Harry Burrard and Sir Hew Dalrymple. Let it suffice, that they had scarcely claimed the command of the English army, when they exhibited their military incompetence. Instead of completing the work which their subordinate had so well commenced, Sir Harry Burrard refused to follow the beaten army, and Sir Hew Dalrymple allowed General Kellerman to persuade him into a conference on the following day, which led to an agreement for the evacuation of Portugal by the French army, with all it

could carry away with it—every man composing which must, had Sir Arthur been left to complete his work, have been a prisoner of war. This was the famous Convention of Cintra, signed on the 30th of August.

As soon as this arrangement became known in England, it raised a storm of indignation that threatened with disgrace every one in any way connected with it. The Ministry, who were not strong enough in popular favour to stand up against universal odium, were believed to be seeking a scape-goat, and it seemed probable that this would be the junior commander, whose promising career had been so abruptly closed.

VISCOUNT CASTLEREAGH TO EARL TEMPLE.

Stanmore Park, Aug. 12, 1808.

My dear Lord,

Many thanks for the deputation. I have desired you may receive from the office such news as may arrive; although not official, I give credit to the retreat of the enemy from Madrid. I cannot yet persuade myself that this movement is with a view to final evacuation—more likely to assemble in force on the Ebro, with a view of meeting his reinforcements, where he will probably take a look at his general difficulties, and then decide, whether he can afford to undertake the conquest of Spain.

Junot, if he did not move off upon the approach of Wellesley's force, seems in a scrape. If he did, the army of Estramadura will worry him not a little before he reaches Burgos.

I am my dear Lord,

Yours very faithfully,

Castlereagh.

MR. T. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Boconnoc, Sept. 4, 1808.

MY DEAREST BROTHER;

I received last night your letter from Wotton, by which I perceive that you expect your son George to pass this way; I fear that there is little chance of my meeting him here, as I had intended to go from hence on Tuesday, and though I stay three or four days more in hopes of seeing Henry at Plymouth, if that can be accomplished, I shall scarcely be able to prolong my residence here till George's arrival from the Isle of Anglesea. Undoubtedly, however, you may depend upon my writing nothing to him that is inconsistent with the ideas which you seem to entertain upon this subject; it is one too delicate for me to interfere in, and though I felt myself obliged by his letter to write both to him and you, and not to disguise from you the impression of my sentiments such as they were, it is after all a point for your determination only, and it is one on which nobody would be justified in being over-importunate with you.

If I were to pursue the discussion, I should express to you my fears, least you should not have sufficiently dwelt upon the changing state of this country in the speculations which you entertain on the comparison between the profession of the army, and the pursuits of parliament. In former times, a noble younger brother with less talents than George possesses, might much more easily have looked to a provision by office or sinecure, than he can now hope to do. Independant of the general spirit of reform which has been bred by the changes and revolutions of all the countries in Europe, the increased pressure of taxes in latter days has here produced, in the people at large, and in the parliament too, a very jealous and feverish suspicion of offices and emoluments. Mr. Bankes' Committee is much more popular than many people suppose it to be, and I am very much mistaken if

the temper of the times will not be such as to produce regulations very unfavourable to those views which appear to be forward in your hopes respecting George's provision in life, arising from any parliamentary pursuits, and from those particular objects which are to supply the place of a regular profession. The army on the other hand is increasing in estimation, and the protracted state of warfare which must be looked to in Europe, is likely to add to that estimation in this as well as in every other country; and when you look at Lord Moira, Lord Mulgrave, Lord Chatham, Lord Cornwallis, &c., it may surely be safely said, that talents less than those which George possesses, offer from the military profession a fair and open road to the greatest situations which this country has to give. This subject runs away with me, and yet I feel that it is one on which I should not press too hardly; my warm and true affection for you and yours must not make me over-officious and importunate.

A long letter from Lord Holland yesterday, gave us the most authentic accounts of all his Spanish correspondence, which is grown very extensive; he has heard from Romana, who tells him that his resolution was taken on the 1st of August, and executed on the 11th, and he describes his army to have consisted of 14,000, of which he brought away 9000. Cuesta is described as being honest, but very headstrong and imprudent, and the loss at Rio Seco is attributed to his rashness. It is, therefore, reckoned good news that the Corunna letters of 16th August, announce that Cuesta is sick, and that the remains of his army with 1500 of his cavalry is gone to join Blake, who commands 23,000 infantry, regular regiments filled up by new levies; the Asturians have 15,000 peasants under Generals Miranda and Ponti; but great stress is laid upon the useful services of an army (of which we have heard nothing) consisting of 24,000 infantry and 9000 cavalry, under General Galuzzo, in Estramadura; this army has been of the greatest use in taking and maintaining strong positions, particularly that of the famous

bridge of Almanaz over the Tagus, and they succeeded in effectually interrupting the communication between Madrid and Lisbon, and in securing the intercourse between Blake and Castanos.

From Valentia, Arragon and Catalonia, the accounts are very vague and unintelligible, but no misfortune there has been heard of, and they have succeeded in fortifying Valentia, and in mounting sixty pieces of cannon to defend that city. Doyle states the French force now at Burgos, to be 40,000 infantry and 6000 cavalry; they have made Doyle a brigadier-general, and Kennedy and Cowell, lieutenant-colonels in their service, but they are not attached to any division. The provinces are all occupied with a plan of government and of General Assembly, and if Ferdinand returns, he will not find the absolute throne he left behind him.

I hear nothing of Ebrington having sailed from Plymouth.

P.S. Did I not mention to you in my last that the Duke of York has written an official letter to Lord Hawkesbury, desiring that government would prosecute the pamphlet called "His Defence," as a libel, and that Colonel Gordon has written to Lord Grenville by the Duke's order, to disclaim all knowledge of it, and to reprobate the falsehood of it.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Boconnoc, Sept. 8, 1808.

My dearest Brother,

An astonishing change has taken place in the affairs of Spain and Portugal since I last wrote to you. The surrender of Dupont, to which the whole is owing, was surely an event as much beyond all reasonable calculation as any other of the wonders of these days. Had that not happened, Bessières, instead of retreating back again to Burgos, would have pursued his march to Portugal; and Wellesley, who had a difficult task

to beat Junot single, must, if Bessières had joined Junot, have re-embarked with loss, or have capitulated with his whole force.

As far as one can judge, Wellesley seems really to have done well; and the advantage of a victory in a pitched field of battle, by British troops, over a force not much inferior in numbers of French troops, is under the present circumstances extremely important.

Our countrymen are certainly still running a great deal too fast, when they conclude that the whole struggle in Spain is over. I am afraid they will find on the contrary, that it is not yet begun. Bonaparte is evidently waiting to assemble a great and overwhelming army, with which he means again to enter Spain. The difficulties he will have to encounter are, no doubt, very great, from the nature of the country, and from the inveteracy and warlike genius of the people. But, if the war is to be carried on (as seems probable) at our cost, I am afraid we shall hear many a heavy groan in the wheels of our financial machinery, before it is concluded.

In the meanwhile, these successes, however little share they have had in producing them, appear already to have raised the insolence of some of our rulers, even beyond its usual height. Canning's order of *ne exeat regno* to Henry, is something beyond his usual flights. I have written in such terms as the occasion required, to Wellesley and Bathurst, my sense of this proceeding, that it may be communicated to Canning, But I cannot advise Henry to risk the permanent establishment, which good fortune has so easily put into his possession, by treating the order with the contempt which, in other respects, it deserves. A man capable of acting in the manner Canning has already done, may easily be driven, by arrogance and passion, to go greater lengths; and although all the world would blame him, yet that would be a poor consolation to Henry for the loss.

Ebrington is a day after the fair; but still it was far better

for him to go, and I wish my forebodings may not deceive me in thinking that we have still much and much more to do in this Iberian Peninsula.

I heartily wish George was there also; as a soldier I should think best, for so you know I have always thought; but if not, then as a traveller, or an occasional visitor, if it were only to look for a month or six weeks, or rather, for six months at least, at Lisbon, Cadiz, and Gibraltar, and to see fleets and armies, and above all, men—which he most wants to see—instead of the terrible want of all object, pursuit, and employment, which now hangs upon him. I know Tom has written to you fully on this subject, and most cordially do I concur in all he has said. Nothing but the anxiety I feel upon it would have induced me to say these few words, which can, however, add nothing to what he has so much better expressed. I know there is a sort of ridicule that may attach to my so expressing myself of a profession in which I happen to have succeeded so much beyond my merits; but indeed it is true, that with the temper of the country, with all that belongs to the situation and character of our Royal Family, and with many other circumstances that must occur to you, the profession of a politician is the very worst to which a young man can be brought up. And yet even if that were decidedly his sole object and profession, I know not anything that I should more earnestly recommend, with that view, than the substituting some such object and employment as I have described, in the place of his present total idleness; and of the more strenuous inertness of an approaching winter and spring in London.

The accompanying estimate of Sir Arthur Wellesley's military genius, at this early period of his career, is entitled to particular attention, as proceeding from the statesman who was the first among his colleagues to

discover his superiority in his profession, the first publicly to recognise it, and the first to obtain for him, by his personal influence, opportunities and facilities for its display.

VISCOUNT CASTLEREAGH TO EARL TEMPLE.

St. James's Square, Sept. 8.

My dear Lord,

I have been tempted to delay thanking you for your letter, in the hope of sending you later intelligence from Portugal; but it does not choose to come. I cannot any longer postpone my acknowledgments; and assuring you I shall have much pleasure in availing myself of your co-operation when the time comes for calling upon parliament to acknowledge Wellesley's services as they deserve. In addition to the public accounts, all those to be collected from private sources, bear the most gratifying testimony to his extraordinary merit as the commander of our army, and to the conduct of the troops, both in and out of action, whilst placed under his orders. Their discipline was as strict, as their courage was distinguished; and though arriving only as the advanced guard of an army, and consequently less perfect in the heavier equipments of an army, they were perfectly moveable; and without trusting to the country for anything but wine and cattle, they never had less than sixteen days bread accompanying their movements: such is the advantage of a biscuit and a water commissariat.

Whilst I always listen with great attention to your good advice, even when delivered on your legs, I am sure you will not expect me to reply to it, except in the latter case. I must also leave my friend Mulgrave to fight his own battle, which, with Keats's assistance he will probably be able to do, and relieve you from a longer letter, having no news to send you.

I am, my dear Lord,

Yours sincerely,

Castlereagh.

The communications now about to be printed, belong to that extremely confidential correspondence that acquainted the Marquis of Buckingham with some of the most secret transactions of state.

——— TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Sept. 17, 1808.

The public indignation this day is at its height. Since the publication of the Gazette, the people seem quite wild. In the city, the discontent and murmur is not in the least restrained, and I must suppose that immediate inquiry must be made into the causes of what is universally considered a great national calamity. To do the Ministers justice, their anxiety and misery, is not second to that which the other classes of people feel. I trust your Lordship does not disapprove of what has been done on our part to put all that in a fair point of view to the world. The black edge has had a wonderful effect, and above five hundred has been sold additional. I did not think it justifiable or wise, in the first instance, to charge this calamity upon government, but confine it either to the folly, the madness, or the wickedness of those concerned immediately.

The following circumstance I consider very mysterious. Yesterday I received a most kind note from Sydenham, conveying Lord Wellesley's thanks to me for the account of the campaign in Portugal, which he said was very well done, and gave the greatest satisfaction to the friends of Sir Arthur. The note then continued to state all that I wrote to your Lordship yesterday; and I beg to draw your Lordship's attention to that part of it where he says, "Sir Arthur had nothing to do with the operations of the army since the arrival of Sir H. Dalrymple." At a late hour yesterday, I received another, to tell me that Sir

A. Wellesley had signed the preliminaries; and that, therefore, he requested me not to say anything to the effect of his former note in the office. Of course to that point I did not, but on every other I touched as largely as I could. I went this morning early to see Lord Wellesley or Captain Sydenham, but both had left town at seven for Ramsgate.

I cannot but think all this very odd; it is clear that neither of the above knew the latter circumstance, for nearly twenty-four hours after it had been known to Ministers. And I am satisfied the fact itself both startled and hurt his best friends. On the other hand, Sir Hew never mentions Sir Arthur in his despatch—sends him off the 24th, and on the 30th, he was perfectly ignorant of what steps had been finally resolved on. I wrote to Sydenham this day, to the following effect. "That he knew my zeal and affection for Sir Arthur; that I laboured incessantly to evince both. But at this moment, I felt greatly embarrassed how to act. Not twenty-four hours before, the character of Sir Arthur was at its zenith in public estimation, but that at present it was mixed with those of the authors and contrivers of the Convention, and that I requested some lights from him on the subject for my guidance." I shall, of course, hear on Monday.

The affair in the Baltic is likely to turn out as brilliantly as the other has proved the reverse. Sir S. Hood, with his two ships alone, attacked the whole Russian squadron. Not a doubt is entertained of the entire destruction of the Russian fleet in Port Baltic.

——— TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Nov. 23rd.

I find to my great grief, as I am sure it will be to your Lordship's, that Sir A. is ordered home together with Dalrymple and Burrard, and that there must be a military inquiry

on which to ground a court-martial. This was the result of the Cabinet of yesterday, but was by no means done at the instance of the Ministers, who, one and all were of a different opinion—at least Canning, Mulgrave, Castlereagh, and Hawkesbury—so was assured Lord W. before he left town. When he went, he firmly believed that Sir Arthur was actually detached at the head of 18,000 men to Spain, with Spencer, Ferguson, &c., and that Moore would remain in command in Portugal: that Sir Hew and Sir Harry would be recalled, and that the matter would rest there. They had not then seen the King. The result of the Cabinet was yesterday as above, and there is little doubt, but that the Duke of Cumberland, acting upon the King's feelings, has had that effect.

The King himself has been in a state to be pitied ever since this news arrived. His joy on the receipt of Sir Arthur's two first dispatches was extreme; the reverse has been almost too much for him, and Colonel Taylor has written to a friend, that he has quite lost his rest upon it. Sir Arthur was to have been Viscount Vimeira, and to have had the rank of General in Spain, where he would have commanded-in-chief. All now an empty bubble, and if ordered home, of which I have no doubt, it is all over with him. The King is said, to have said that he knew of no excuse a British officer could make for signing such disgraceful conditions both for himself and for the nation, and that he could not separate Sir Arthur's conduct from that of the other two. That if on inquiry Wellesley was acquitted, his information, with respect to the other two would, and must be material enough to have him on the spot. I have great reason to believe all the above to be facts.

There have been Cabinets Tuesday, Thursday, and to-day. Ministers have acted on Souza's information, and instantly sent off letters to the commanders by sea and land, to prevent, if possible, those disgraceful conditions from being ratified, or at least carried into effect. Would your Lordship believe that, after

Sir C. Cotton refused to ratify the Russian article, and that he got possession, in virtue of the others, of the Tagus forts, that he volunteered that magnanimous article to the Russian admiral, which now exists a part of the treaty? It is to be recollected that the French dropt all pretence of treating for them. So much for bad example.

One most extraordinary fact is the following, which I know. Sir Hew Dalrymple's private letter to the Duke of York runs thus: "Sir Arthur Wellesley approves of every article of the treaty, as perfectly wise and prudent; and when such a man recommends prudence, it must be perfectly safe to follow him." Here your Lordship sees is assertion for assertion, and an endless field of future squabble and discussion. The Duke of Cumberland has found out that all would be cured, should one of the blood-royal go out in command; and sorry am I to say that this day the question of the Duke of York and Lord Chatham going out is *respectably* revived.

By sending my hint and precedent to Sheridan and Whitbread, which I had a fair opportunity of doing, Westminster is about to be called together. London has been tried, and although the thing is not quite rejected, yet the opinion in general is to be quiet. Everything, however, shall be done. But as to enquiry of one sort or another, it will be made. The clamour is as loud as ever, and will not, nor cannot be stilled.

——— TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

After I wrote a few hasty lines to you on Saturday evening, as I returned I met Cooke on horseback; he called me to him, and after having laughed heartily at having put the office in mourning, I said to him, that I was rejoiced that Sir Arthur had sent home his protest against the Convention, &c., as I before stated to your Lordship. To which he said very pointedly. "You are Sir Arthur's friend—take care that you are a judicious one. I

am of opinion, that if he, (Sir Arthur,) had not been interfered with, this horrible business had never taken place; but, as it is, he can never swear his name off the bond," and he rode away leaving me to think that to a certain degree he was implicated in this business; or that at least government, for their own views, with the Wellesley family. Yesterday; I called early at W. Pole's house, and he saw me instantly. I told him my motive for calling was to ascertain, if possible, what share Sir Arthur had in the transaction, for obvious reasons, &c.

He said, that knowing the interest I took in them all, he would read for me in confidence, as much of his brother's letter to Castlereagh as he could, consistently with his duty to the secrecy he was bound to observe with respect to individuals; adding significantly, that he had sent for Sydenham and Lord Wellesley to come to town, and that I should hear everything from the former. He then read for me, as well as I recollect, nearly as follows:—"I authorize you to make it known in any manner you think proper, that I had no share whatever in consulting upon, negotiating, or drawing up the preliminary articles of the Convention. They were done by Kellerman, in the presence of Sir Hew Dalrymple and General Burrard, and adopted by them without any alteration whatever. And I was merely ordered to sign them, which I did, conceiving it my duty so to do, without being consulted in any single instance respecting any one of these articles whatever." He then read a word or two, which in substance related to "some measures which ought at any rate to be adopted to make 'those fellows' restore the church-plate," and then added of himself. "The fact is, the case was so much altered after the French had ceased to be pushed, that my brother seeing that there would be nothing but bungle go forward, thought it a wise thing to get the French out of Portugal, but distinctly protested against those terms which you have seen, but which you cannot abhor more than I do. And as to Arthur's signing them, I suppose he acted agreeably to the rules of his profession—at least his

idea of them; but, I tell you candidly, I would rather have thrust my right hand into this fire, than have put it to such an instrument."

I said, I hope, Sir, this thing brings their own conduct home to the government, and that they see their folly in the appointment, &c. He said, "I'll tell you candidly, as the army is constituted here, Arthur could not be left in this great command—there were too many older officers; but the individual appointment of Sir Hew was quite accidental, and was merely meant to parry something of that kind much worse." We parted with great civilities and professions on his part. Sydenham, nor Lord Wellesley, nor H. Wellesley are come to town, which surprises me. The brutal mob are violent against Sir Arthur.

——— TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Lord Wellesley is come to town, and Sydenham. The former and Mr. Pole have sent me a kind message by him, which I enclose, but request to have again. To Pole, as well as Lord Wellesley. I always state that I am not, in anything I do, acting from my own views, so much as discharging the duty I owe to your Lordship, with whose wishes I am so well acquainted. A prodigious deal has thus been done. I suggested to them first to send expresses to your Lordship, Lord Grenville and Temple, which Lord Wellesley doubted would be right at first; and your Lordship's answer, with those of Lord Grenville and Temple, have filled him absolutely with happiness. From Lord Grenville, in particular, he has received two letters; the one relating solely to Arthur Wellesley, the other to his own concerns. The last couched in such endearing terms of ancient friendship, as to cause him to shed tears for half-an-hour. At Canning's conduct, in an affair connected with your Lordship's family, he is as indignant as if the injury was done to himself. He says, Canning is an upstart, and behaves himself accordingly.

Sydenham mooted to-day what he never did before, a possibility of a reunion in politics, &c., and said that he was confident Lord Wellesley and Lord Grenville, and your Lordship, would meet again with all your former affections, and that Lord Wellesley owned that he had no such friends. I told him that if Lord Wellesley attempted to graft his regards and friendship upon any other stock than ancient friendship and love, he would gather nothing but sour fruit for his pains. H. Wellesley is still in the country, and is taken ill on this business; his fibre is of the most irritable nature, and he cannot bear up against this severe stroke upon his family importance, who were sailing before the wind with every sail set, and have struck almost in the harbour's mouth. W. Pole is as agitated, but he gets rid of it by cursing and swearing, and talking over it to every body. He says, however, that he thinks Sir Arthur decidedly wrong to have signed these preliminaries. Lord Wellesley bears up very well; his present view of things is to make a *pièce justicatif* of the whole of Sir Arthur's case; and if Lord Castlereagh refuses to give it to the King, that he will himself. The only persons beside, will be your Lordship's family, because he knows he can confide in your honour, that you will not turn it against the Ministers. He goes to Ramsgate again to-morrow, where, I find, he has a fresh *amour*, after his manner, with a very stale inamorata, but with which he is quite intoxicated for the present.

On the 22nd, Sir H. Dalrymple, Sir H. Burrard, General Kellerman, and Sir Arthur dined together. About four, Campbell was sent away. After dinner the three former retired up stairs, and left Sir Arthur walking about below; in half an hour, pen and ink and paper were called for. About a quarter past nine, Sir Arthur was sent for, and on coming into the room Sir Hew said, "Sir Arthur, General Kellerman and myself have agreed to certain terms of an armistice which I have sent for you to sign. I should have signed them myself, but, General

Kellerman says that he wishes they should be signed by an "English officer of the same rank with himself," accordingly Sir Arthur immediately signed them. Your Lordship sees the drift of Kellerman, who was eager to get the signature of the general to such terms as these, by whom they had been beaten. I have a great deal more to say, but must stop for want of time. I thank your Lordship most sincerely for the means of making the only statesman-like view, which has been yet given of the Convention. It has been most extremely praised—particularly by Cooke and Lord Wellesley. Junot would not suffer Arthur Wellesley to pass through the French lines to have an interview with Cotton; in short, was as insolent as possible. May I ask your Lordship, can Sir Hew be tried by court-martial, and for what? My belief is, nothing will be done in that way; he and Burrard will be recalled, and General Moore will be commander-in-chief. After all Sir Arthur will, in no case, come home, and Ministers are anxious to give him the best command they can devise—but they have spoiled all.

Sir Charles Cotton and the navy, gave some signs of British spirit. Captain Halstead negotiated with Junot for the Tagus Forts, and the latter being insolent, Captain Halstead clapped on his hat, and put his hands aside, and told him he was there on a perfect footing of equality with him, and that if he did not agree to their immediate surrender, he would call for his barge, and he would answer for it, Admiral Cotton would soon bring him to reason.

The Marquis Wellesley had sufficient influence with the government, to prevent his brother being made a victim; there seems, indeed, to have been something like an understanding between the parties to this effect, though of its exact character there remain no details; neither Sir Arthur, however, nor the Marquis appear to

have been quite confident of his prospects in this direction, and they gladly availed themselves of the influence of several powerful friends in Opposition, to support his cause. The Grenvilles had on more than one occasion, exerted themselves to advance his interests, and promptly showed that they were not likely to abandon him at such a crisis.

THE MARQUIS WELLESLEY TO EARL TEMPLE.

Apsley House, Sept. 20, 1808.

My dear Lord,

Your very kind, and I must add, able and spirited letter, being directed to Worthing, did not reach me until I had received the first rumours of the painful result of my brother's splendid achievements in Portugal. You will easily conceive, my dear Lord, the impression which such intelligence must have made on my mind; and you will pardon the delay of my acknowledgment of your goodness, when I assure you, that it was not possible for me to meet the tone of your amicable and noble sentiments, in the state of my spirits, upon the first emotions occasioned by M. de Souza's communications. Being now satisfied that Sir Arthur Wellesley neither negotiated, nor approved, nor suffered to pass without remonstrance the articles signed with his name, I feel myself relieved from all apprehension for the lustre of his fame; and I am able, with confidence, to return my most cordial thanks to you for the just sense which you have expressed with so much ardour of his services, and for the warm and generous zeal which you have manifested for his reputation and honour.

Being convinced that you would be anxious to learn the earliest intelligence of his operations, I requested Mr. Sydenham, in my absence from town, to send an express to you, whenever advices might be received from Portugal. I was most happy to

find that my commission had been executed to your satisfaction by Mr. Sydenham.

When I write to Arthur, I will not fail to communicate your highly interesting letter to him. He will receive it with the same sensations of respect, gratitude and affection, which it has excited in my mind.

Believe me to be, my dear Lord,
With great regard and esteem,
Your faithful and obliged, humble servant,
WELLESLEY.

It is necessary to compare the statement just given, with that subsequently published by Sir Hew Dalrymple, who says: "Lieutenant-Generals Sir Harry Burrard and Sir Arthur Wellesley assisted in the discussions which took place on this occasion, and I need urge no other reason for my assenting to the measure proposed, than *that it was recommended by Sir Arthur Wellesley*, whose opinion, as being the most competent judge of the relative situations of the two armies at this point of time, I should have thought it my duty to follow, even if his judgment had not been so particularly recommended to my attention by the Secretary of State. *Sir Arthur recommended the measure of allowing the French to evacuate Portugal, with their arms and baggage.*"*

Sir Arthur states that he *concurred* with the Commander of the forces (Sir Hew Dalrymple) *in thinking it expedient.* It is almost needless to say that the two statements are opposed to each other. The alleged *recommendation* of Sir Hew, implies suggestion, and is

* Memoir of Sir Hew Dalrymple's Proceedings, &c.

evidently put forward to throw the entire responsibility from his own shoulders; the *concurrence*, is the natural part of an inferior at a consultation, which was Sir Arthur's position there. We must, however, be allowed to bring forward further evidence, and the reader's attention is particularly directed to the following extract from one of his letters written at the time.

Although my name is affixed to this instrument, I beg that you will not believe that I negotiated it, that I approve of it, or that I had any hand in writing it. It was negotiated by the General himself in my presence, and that of Sir H. Burrard, and after it had been signed by Kellerman himself, Sir H. Dalrymple desired me to sign it. Kellerman objected to my going to the Admiral through the French posts, as he found I so strongly objected to the arrangement, and yet he was the person who proposed to Sir Hew, that I should sign the arrangement, which he, (Sir Hew,) was going to sign himself.

In the communication about to be laid before the reader, we must direct attention to the reference to what took place before the 22nd of August—that is, the refusal to follow up the victory of Vimeira, which enabled the French army to secure an imposing position, and induced the writer to concur in thinking the Convention of Cintra "expedient."

SIR ARTHUR WELLESLEY TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

London, Oct. 11, 1808.

My dear Lord,

I assure you that I am most sensible of the friendship and

kindness of Lord Temple and yourself, of which I hope to prove myself worthy. My situation is a very awkward one, and I can relieve myself from it only by the result of an enquiry.

I am accused of being the adviser of persons over whom I had no control, and who refused to follow my advice, and am made responsible for the acts of others. The real share which I have had in the transactions, which in my opinion have deservedly incurred the displeasure of the public, cannot be known till they will be enquired into; and in the meantime, Sir Hew Dalrymple has left the government and the public so completely in the dark respecting the military expediency of allowing the French to evacuate Portugal, that that part of the question, which is the only one in which I am involved, is as little understood as the rest. I know of no immediate remedy for these difficulties of my situation, excepting patience and temper; and I thank God that the undeserved abuse which has been heaped upon me, has not altered the latter.

In respect to the conduct of my case, I have determined that I will publish nothing; nor will authorize the publication of anything by others. This forbearance is particularly incumbent upon me, as the whole subject must be enquired into. I have also determined that I will not involve others in scrapes because they differed in opinion with me previously to the 22nd of August, notwithstanding that difference of opinion and the alteration of system were the cause of the military expediency of allowing the French to withdraw from Portugal. I am afraid that I shall experience some difficulty in carrying this intention into execution, because the truth must come out; but I will endeavour not to bring others (viz., Sir Harry Burrard,) into a scrape, not only out of regard to him, but because I think it fatal to the public service to expose officers to the treatment which I have received, and to punishment for acting upon their own military opinions, which opinions they may fairly entertain.

I have also determined to stand singly. There is nothing in

common between Sir Hew Dalrymple and me, or between the government and me; if the government are supposed to be involved in the question; and I shall act accordingly. I now enclose your Lordship the copy of a letter which I have written to the Secretary of State since my arrival. The principal object of this letter was to relieve myself from the imputation of having negotiated the armistice, which was cast on me by an inaccuracy of expression in Sir Hew Dalrymple's letter of the 3rd of September; and, in doing this, I thought it fair to avow to the King and his Ministers, that I had concurred with Sir Hew Dalrymple in the opinion that it was expedient to allow the French to evacuate Portugal; and to state my reasons for entertaining that opinion. In fact, I am convinced that if we had not allowed them to evacuate that kingdom in August, we should have been glad to do so in November or December, after we should have lost many men in the operations which we must have carried on against them, in a most unhealthy country, (Alentejo,) in the worst season of the year.

I request your Lordship not to allow any copy to be taken of this letter, as, however desirable it might be to set the public right even upon that part of the case to which it refers, I am determined that they shall know nothing from me, excepting through the channel of a regular enquiry.

Pray present my best respects to Lady Buckingham and Lady Mary, and believe me,

My dear Lord,
Your most affectionate
And obliged humble servant,
ARTHUR WELLESLEY.

Sir Arthur in the course of a few days, became satisfied that reserve was likely to injure him in the estimation of those friends of whose influence he stood most in need, we therefore find him acquainting Lord Temple, that so

far from having been the originator of the objectionable stipulations in the Convention, he had objected at the time to Sir Hew Dalrymple to several, which objections Sir Hew had over-ruled. Sir Arthur then signed the Convention rather than set himself in opposition to his commanding officer, in the face of the whole army, on the very first day that Sir Hew assumed the command. Some other particulars related by him will be found equally interesting.

SIR ARTHUR WELLESLEY TO EARL TEMPLE.

London, Oct. 14, 1808.

My dear Lord,

I am very much obliged to you for your letter of the 16th September and 9th instant, the former of which I received from Mr. Dardis this day. I intended to address you upon the latter while you were at Stowe, and to refer you to a letter which I had written to Lord Buckingham, on the transactions to which it relates; of which letter, however, as you are now gone to Eastbourne, I now enclose you a copy.

I have but little to add to what that letter contains, and that little will, I fear, tend to diminish the favourable impression which the zeal of my friends had given you, of the prudence of my conduct in signing the armistice of the 22nd of August. I did not protest against any part of that instrument. I stated to the commander of the forces the objections which I felt to the form which was adopted, to allowing the French to treat for the Russians, to the time which was given to the suspension of hostilities, and to the *verbiage;* and in point of fact, it was settled, and afterwards carried into execution, as I understand, by a separate article of the Convention, which (strange to tell) was never sent home—that the property to be carried away by

the French troops, was to be only their military equipments. The objections which occurred to me, and which I stated, were overruled by the commander of the forces; and I signed the armistice by his desire, which he made at the suggestion of General Kellerman. I don't think that the expression of this desire would be considered tantamount to an order. I certainly think that it was so put, that I could have declined to comply with it; and here is the great difficulty of my situation. Such is the temper of the times, and the violence of the prejudices excited against me upon this subject, that my motives will never be understood, and I shall never have credit for those which really actuated me.

I signed it, notwithstanding my objections to it, because I would not, in the face of the whole army, set myself up in opposition to the commander of the forces on the very day he joined his army. His task was sufficiently difficult, without adding to it that additional difficulty. I agreed with him upon the main point, viz., the evacuation by the French troops. My refusal to sign would not have prevented the execution of the instrument, and would only have tended to raise my character, at the expense of others; and probably at that of not a little outrage and want of discipline in the army. These were my motives. Besides that, to tell you the truth, when I consented to sign, I did not conceive the instrument was to be of that formal nature, which it has since been made. One article, that regarding the Russians, I know depended, as was understood, and stated by Sir Hew Dalrymple, upon the Admiral. And it is an extraordinary circumstance, that this instrument, upon which so much stress has been laid, was never ratified, and no one article of it was ever carried into execution, excepting that by which hostilities were suspended. I will send Lord Buckingham a copy of this letter, as well as that which I have written to himself.

Ever, &c.,

ARTHUR WELLESLEY.

THE MARQUIS WELLESLEY TO EARL TEMPLE.

Apsley House, Oct. 14, 1808.

MY DEAR LORD,

In the absence of Sir Arthur Wellesley from England, I felt myself unable to afford you the information which your very kind and flattering letter required, with a view to his defence. Since his return from Portugal, he has written a letter to Lord Buckingham, containing a copy of one, which he addressed to Lord Castlereagh.* Both these papers he has communicated to me; and as they contain all that he deems it proper to commit to writing, previously to the approaching investigation of affairs in Portugal, I must refer you, my dear Lord, to those statements, which will certainly be open to your examination, whenever you may see Lord Buckingham. My brother and I are deeply sensible of the cordiality and high spirit of honour, which have been so manifest in your friendly zeal on this occasion; and I entertain a firm confidence that you will find Sir Arthur Wellesley's conduct, throughout the late transactions in Portugal, to have been worthy of his established character, and of your approbation.

Believe me to be, my dear Lord,

With the highest esteem and regard,

Your most faithful servant,

WELLESLEY.

However strongly Sir Arthur Wellesley objected to bringing accusations against Sir Harry Burrard in his own justification, it is clear from the following communication, detailing the conduct of that officer previously to and immediately after the battle, that he was the cause of the Convention. The reader is now in possession of the

* Dated 6th October. It has frequently been printed.

leading facts of the case, and although they do not free Sir Hew Dalrymple from the responsibility of a subsequent act, they go far to prove that in the concurrent state of things it could not have been avoided.

The military historian of these incidents has stated his opinion of Burrard's interposition, to the same effect.* We shall presently produce another eminent authority, who had the advantage of being upon the spot almost immediately after the event, and acquired a knowledge of the locality, and of the enemy's position.† With the fullest details of the entire campaign accessible to every reader, it is something beyond ordinary indifference to facts, to find a modern French writer venturing to state Junot's force at Vimeira, as only half that of the English.‡ The strength of his army, according to the "Embarkation Return," to be found in Napier, was nearer double than half that of the force opposed to him, and though the whole was not then available, his advantages were considered so striking, that his imperial master, when he became aware of his discomfiture, expressed an intention of making it the subject of a military court of inquiry.

SIR ARTHUR WELLESLEY TO EARL TEMPLE.

Holyhead, Oct. 19, 1808.

My dear Lord,

I received this morning your very kind letter of the 16th, and I agree entirely in opinion with you, that it would be most

* Napier's "History of the War in the Peninsula." Vol. I., p. 71, 1851.

† See letter of Admiral Berkeley, Feb. 14, 1809.

‡ Thiers' "Consulat." Tome IX.

desirable that my zealous friends should cease to defend me; but it will be very difficult to prevail upon them to do so; and, indeed, I don't know how to set about the work, for I don't know who the writers are. I can safely declare that neither I, my brother, my aides-de-camp, or my immediate friends have written or published one word upon the late Convention in Portugal, excepting the letter to the Secretary of State, of which I enclosed you a copy, and that letter has not been, and cannot be published, excepting by the government. I have an insuperable objection to justify myself for the share I had in the armistice of the 22nd August, by attacking Sir H. Burrard, for his conduct on the 20th and 21st; and in fact, if your Lordship will consider the matter, you will see that to attack him will be no justification to me, but a bad set-off, which can only take in the vulgar. On the 22nd of August, I was to consider the state of things as they were, not in what manner they had been brought into the situation in which they were found. If I had been capable of allowing the last-mentioned consideration to weigh with me, I might with justice be accused of having given an opinion in favour of the measure of allowing the French to withdraw, in resentment of the difference of opinion on former operations which had existed between Sir H. Burrard and me. The situation of the army there on the 22nd August, is and can be my only justification; the mode in which it was brought into that situation, is another question which will very probably come under consideration when these transactions will be inquired into; but they must come out in the course of the inquiry, and cannot be alleged by me as any justification, or as the foundation of the opinion I entertained and gave.

Besides the objection I have to blaming Sir H. Burrard, by way of justification of myself, I object to it on the ground that I consider it injurious to the public service, and particularly to the officers of the army, to institute public inquiries into their conduct in instances in which they may have acted fairly upon their own

opinions, for which opinions they had fair military grounds. I thought, and still think that Sir J. Moore's corps ought not to have been diverted from its proposed position at Santarem; and that much advantage would have resulted from the pursuit of the enemy on the 21st; but there were fair military grounds for entertaining a different opinion upon both these points; and I acknowledge that I should be very sorry to have my own opinions and conduct, taken up and acted upon, on the spur of the occasion, scrupulously weighed and considered, probably by prejudiced persons, weeks or possibly months after the occurrences which gave them birth, have passed by and been forgotten. Indeed, who knows that this may not yet be my fate; and that the independence and temerity of which I am accused, may not become a regular charge, as the foundation of the evils which rendered the Convention necessary? But there is another reason why Sir H. Burrard's conduct cannot now become the object of inquiry, and for which Ministers could not remove him from his command on account of transactions and opinions entertained and acted upon on the 20th and 21st of August. In point of fact, there is not, and could not be any official report or account of those transactions and opinions.

I delivered the command to Sir H. Burrard on the evening of the 20th, on board the frigate in Marceira Roads; and he actually exercised it, by ordering me to halt on the morning of the 21st, on which day I had ordered the army to march. He likewise, on the same night, altered the disposition which I had proposed to him on the 8th of August, for Sir J. Moore's corps; which disposition Sir J. Moore was, at that moment, in the act of carrying into execution. There was of course at that moment an end of my correspondence with the Secretary of State; and I doubt much whether Sir H. Burrard ever reported what he did on that evening, which I conceive to have been fatal to the campaign. To this succeeded the morning of the 21st, and I took the command in the battle, because Sir Harry was still in his

ship, and because if he had been upon the ground he could have done nothing. He arrived upon the ground when the battle was half over, and I asked him whether I should continue the operations in the manner in which I had commenced them. He desired me to do whatever I pleased. After the enemy were repulsed entirely in both attacks, I proposed to him the pursuit with the left wing, and the march to Torres Vedras with the right; to which he objected, and desired me to halt the pursuing troops on a neighbouring height. You will observe that I then reported to him the circumstances of the action, and he as my commanding officer reported them to the Secretary of State, and certainly never mentioned to him that he had stopped the pursuit of the enemy. This circumstance would probably not have been known, if the discussion between Sir H. and I on the field of battle had not been heard by above twenty officers; but it has not been, and cannot be, in any manner stated officially. Under these circumstances, government may have sufficient reasons to remove him from his command, not to trust him, and not to employ him again; but there are none for inquiring into his conduct.

I must also observe to your Lordship that my conduct is not to be, and cannot be inquired into, excepting for transactions prior to the evening of the 20th, and during the action of the 21st. Sir H. Dalrymple's conduct I conclude will be inquired into; and I must be examined upon this inquiry, and I shall then have an opportunity of explaining, by evidence, the whole of my conduct in respect to the armistice, which is all that I have to explain.

Ever my dear Lord,
Yours most sincerely,
ARTHUR WELLESLEY.

The following is without date, address, or signature:—.

So far from having been the cause of either the armistice or

the capitulation, Sir Arthur protested, in the strongest manner, against both; and even obtruded his opinions and objections on the Commander-in-chief, in a written representation, prepared for the purpose of dissuading him from granting to the enemy the terms which he so unaccountably, and (I think) criminally persisted in granting. You may, perhaps, recollect that the French at Vimeira attacked our left with their left, so that the right wing of the British army was not engaged at all during the action; and, accordingly, the troops which composed it were fresh, and fit for exertion. As soon as the French were defeated by the left wing and rear of our army, Sir Arthur proposed to push on with the right wing (which was four miles nearer than the French were themselves, to the French head-quarters), and to cut them off entirely from their strong posts; there cannot be a shadow of doubt that he would have out-marched them, have taken possession of their head-quarters and other strong places, and have placed them between the large bodies of British troops, in such a situation that they must have surrendered at discretion. He, however, was not allowed to make the attempt, and the French, of course, fell back upon the posts in their rear, and availed themselves of the positions which they had prepared in case of a defeat in the field; and thus, in a few hours, instead of being annihilated as an army, were placed in a situation which would probably have enabled them to hold out against our utmost efforts, during the whole of the winter months.

Even in this dilemma, however, which had been produced by the rejection of Sir Arthur's plan, Sir Arthur objected to allowing the enemy to capitulate, and did everything in his power to prevent the measures which were afterwards adopted. As to his having finally put his name to the articles, he did so in obedience to a positive order of the Commander-in-chief, who, by the bye, was on the point of signing it as his own act, but at the instigation of the French General, Kellerman, refrained from doing so, and ordered Sir Arthur to sign it.

It has been said that Sir Arthur should have proceeded to any extremity, rather than have put his name to so disgraceful an instrument. The fact, however, is, that Sir Arthur was well aware that his refusal to sign would not prevent the Convention from taking place, but that the discord which such a refusal would have occasioned between him and the Commander-in-chief, would have embarrassed the future operations of the army, and perhaps have tended, in a very powerful degree, to frustrate the ultimate great objects of the combined forces in Portugal and Spain. An interruption of harmony and cordial amity among commanders in an army never fails to extend its influence to all ranks in that army, and to produce all the evils of indecision and weakness among the leaders, and of diffidence and timidity among all the subordinate classes down to the private. Sir Arthur's conduct, in signing the capitulation, was regulated by these important considerations; and, in my opinion, he is most justly entitled to the warmest marks of approbation and gratitude from his country, for so eminent a display of disinterested public zeal. He could not have viewed the conditions in the light he certainly did, without being aware that giving his name to them would involve him in the odium which he knew the people of England would attach to them; and he, therefore, in signing them, sacrificed every consideration of personal interest and fame to the object of averting from the great cause in which he was employed, evils which, under a different line of conduct on his part, would scarcely have failed to arise.

You may rely on the correctness of all the facts which I have stated to you. I have seen a variety of letters from officers of the highest respectability in the army in Portugal. They all concur in the same statement; and it is unquestionably evident, that, if the arrival of Burrard and Dalrymple had been delayed two or three days longer, the whole of Junot's force would have surrendered at discretion; and Sir Arthur's fame would have

stood as high as that of the Duke of Marlborough. Not that it is at this moment inferior to it in my estimation; but I mean that the public would then have been compelled to give him that credit which, in justice, he is equally entitled to now. The King, the Duke of York, and the Cabinet ministers, have expressed their entire approbation of his conduct; and I trust that those whose stupidity and obstinacy have been the means of casting a temporary shade over the splendour of his character, will be brought to what they deserve for the injury which they have done to the public, as well as to him.

THE EARL OF ESSEX TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Cashiobury, Oct. 21, 1808.

My dear Lord,

I had the pleasure of seeing Mr. Montague Burgoyne yesterday, and have done everything in my power to persuade Mr. Hills to see the necessity of supporting the public voice upon the present occasion, wishing him to consider it as distinct from any party question; and, I hope he will view it in this light, and use his endeavours to persuade the yeomanry of that part of the country to think with him; I have also written to the Rev. Mr. Wallace, a friend of mine, near Helvedon, and I am sure he will attend. I cannot see upon what ground we are to be accused of prejudicing the generals who commanded, or that we were to take it for granted that his Majesty's Ministers meant to institute an enquiry upon an occasion which they had certainly considered as a victory, by firing the Tower and Park guns after nine o'clock at night. I did hear that Westmoreland, that able and dignified minister, asserted with his usual eloquence, that what we had done in Portugal was equal to Nelson's victory, nay more, as we had got a country and a fleet; surely this must shake the present government, if not they must be Ministers *les plus inébranlables*,

that ever existed, probably owing to some being of wood and others of stone.

I am flattered by your kind manner of expressing yourself in regard to my conduct. I feel that nothing can be more honourable than a steady attachment to those persons of your family and conections.

Believe me, my dear Lord,
Most truly and faithfully yours,
ESSEX.

The state of Ireland had again become a source of anxiety to English politicians, and a violent declaration made by the Roman Catholic prelates in that country, had alarmed those amongst them, who were her best friends. The Grenvilles regarded it as ill-timed and mischievous, and disclaimed all participation in it; but they had other subjects of interest—the proceedings of the military court of inquiry, the alleged disorganisation of the Ministry, and the deficiencies of their own party—to absorb their attention.

EARL TEMPLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Pall Mall, Nov. 4, 1808.

MY DEAR FATHER,

I arrived here the day before yesterday, and in my way passed a day with Tierney, at Brighton. I find him inclined to go along most cordially with us in all our ideas respecting the late decision of the Catholic Bishops. Lauderdale and Grey are of the same way of thinking, and the former has written to Lord Grenville upon it. They seem to think that nothing further can be done for that cause in Parliament, unless the Bishops in some way or

another withdraw, or destroy the effect of their late resolution. Tierney seemed inclined to think it might be possible for Lord Fingall, and the more sensible part of the Catholic body to separate from the Bishops, to declare their separation upon that point, and that then we might support the cause upon the same grounds upon which we stood last year. Without stopping to inquire whether Lord Fingall and Co. would come into that proposition, which I very much doubt, I feel the effect to us of it would be that we should only be fighting the cause of one split of the Catholic body, and not of the Catholic body itself. Much greater odium must and would attach to us, and we should lose much of the advantage ground on which we stood. Tierney at last seemed convinced of this himself. What are Lord Grenville's opinions on the subject?

Tierney lamented to me the state in which we should stand in the House of Commons for want of a leader, unless something was done between this time, and the meeting of Parliament. From all I see, and from all I hear, I cannot help thinking that, at this moment something might be done which would *tirer à conséquence.* The clamour is daily rising against Ministers; the City of London has in terms declared them enemies to the country, and to the King; they are squabbling amongst themselves; and the means now exist, without sacrificing our consistency, of parrying much of the difficult part of the Catholic question. Surely advantage might and should be taken of this juncture. If something is not done, my conviction is that, at the meeting of parliament, we shall assemble a weak, disjointed Opposition, under a head whom all agree in thinking incapable, which is worse than having no head at all.

Do you know anything of Lord Grenville's motions, or when he returns to Dropmore? Tierney agrees with me in thinking that much is upon the cards; but whatever is done ought to be done quickly, which is not very easy if Lord Grenville continues in Cornwall, and Lord Grey in Northumberland. I send you, by

the coach, a long letter I have received from Sir Arthur Wellesley. It is very bad, and we must take great care not to hang a mill-stone about our own necks. Pray send me the letter back. I wish very much too, that you would make Dardis copy out for me, the paper, a copy of which you gave the Prince when at Stowe.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Boconnoc, Nov. 4, 1808.

MY DEAREST BROTHER,

I inclose to you a letter I have received from Ponsonby, and my answer. They relate to the strange resolution of the Irish Catholic bishops. There is not much in either, but the former will show you how very angry Ponsonby is, and certainly not without reason, though some considerable part of this mischief has, probably, arisen from the inference with which he accompanied the statement of this suggestion in parliament; for when he said that this measure would make the King virtually the head of the Catholics, he stated a conclusion neither in itself accurate, nor at all desirable to have been brought under the view of the Catholics. I hope you will approve of the terms of my answer. I foresee much difficulty on the subject. It will be no easy matter after what has passed in Ireland, to get these people to retrace their steps in the teeth of the same clamour which has driven them to this folly. It will be, perhaps, still less easy to get parliament to remove this disqualification, without a concession on this point. And, if in the result the matter should be left in its present state, I shall think that the worst of all things. Pray let me know your sentiments on the whole matter.

What idiots these Ministers are with their court of enquiry. What good can they hope from this proceeding, rather than from the odious mode of bringing Dalrymple to a court-martial,

which all the world (himself included) desires to call for. Its proceedings must be as public, but cannot be equally authoritative; and as far as respects their own case, they have so composed this court, that its decision cannot be unanimous, except by steering clear of that whole branch of the subject—and if so, what have they gained?

I am struck with the feeble manner in which the French papers talk of their reinforcements coming to Spain—boasting as of a great matter, that 40,000 or 50,000 men may speedily be expected there. Is this only a *ruse de guerre*, or is it possible that Bonaparte can so far have mistaken his situation in Spain, as not to have seen that his objects there can only be obtained by an overwhelming force, sent without an hour's delay. If I could think so, it would be the happiest presage of what is to come that I have seen for this many a year, but I can hardly bring myself to be so sanguine.

One hears much of the squabbles among the Ministers, the usual consequence of embarrassments and disgraces, which each labours (in such cases) to throw upon his colleagues. But I am firmly persuaded that weak and disunited as they are, they will hang together as their only security; especially as they are not likely to find much disposition on our side (at least I trust not,) to take part with any of them against their associates.

Since I wrote the above, I have a letter from Lord Grey, strongly pressing some immediate declaration on our part against the Irish bishops, pledging ourselves never to bring this matter forward without concession from them on this point. I cannot say that I am ripe for this measure, but I wish to know what you think and hear on the whole subject. The last French papers show that Bonaparte is seemingly seriously intent on the Spanish business; and if so, he will bring them a force with which the Spaniards will find it difficult to cope, and I shall feel much uneasiness for Moore's army.

What has passed in Ireland makes me still more anxious.

EARL TEMPLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Monday, Nov. 7, 1808.

MY DEAR FATHER,

The idea is very prevalent that Dalrymple means to defend himself entirely at the expense of Ministers, and that he will be able to prove entire inadequacy of means proportioned to the object.

There are whispers also of some secret instructions (the only instructions he received) to spare his troops, ammunition, &c., for Spain. There is, I believe, no doubt of his public as well as private language being extremely hostile to his employers. The general opinion in London is, that if the result of the inquiry is unfavourable to Ministers, the government must fall. Being themselves fully aware of this, the Ministers will take care to arrange the evidence in such a manner as will make the case appear in the most favourable point of view to themselves, and this, as the Court "is to be assisted by the Judge Advocate-General," they will have ample means of doing. It is impossible to trust Lord Moira, who may be, and probably is, playing a game of his own, and even were he not, his vanity would prevent him from attending to the suggestions of any one.

The universal cry in London is against Ministers. Our crimes are all forgotten, and the indignation of the public is now solely directed against government, especially against Castlereagh. Canning is more popular from the opinion which prevails, that he prevented the Duke of York from going to Spain. I know from positive authority that Baird is gone without instructions, and, what is worse, without money. The real cause of his not landing was, that he had not the means of providing for the move of his army; and I know for a fact, that the merchants in Corunna

raised amongst themselves the sum of £15,000 to enable him to proceed. So ill-concerted are all their movements, that Baird's directions at St. Andero were to co-operate with Moore. In the meanwhile, having troops to spare, nothing to do, and being in great want of colonies, it is said that Prevost is sent West India colony hunting.

There still seems to be some doubt whether parliament is to meet or not before Christmas. I should think, however, from the turn things seem to have taken at Erfurth, that it will not, as I should suppose the only object of its meeting would be, to get an Austrian subsidy. I should not be at all surprised if, amongst the terms offered by Bonaparte, he should have graciously proposed to turn Ferdinand loose into Spain. I am convinced he could not do a thing more favourable to his own interests, or which would more completely puzzle Ministers. If that offer is made, I do not see how they can avoid negotiating. I am very anxious to hear when Lord Grenville moves eastward.

Affectionately yours.

Lord Grenville continued to feel a most lively interest in everything relating to the Catholic claims, which he expressed both orally and in writing. His more important speeches in Parliament on this subject were published, as well as one or two compositions in another form. It is to one of these publications he refers, in the first portion of his letter of November 20th. What is subsequently said by him respecting our army in the Peninsula, and the conduct of Sir Arthur Wellesley, were the opinions entertained, at the time of the inquiry, by many of his contemporaries. The position of an expedition government had sent into Spain, was extremely critical. That of

the Ministry by whom it had been organized, appears to have been but a little more satisfactory.

On the 5th of December, under the hand of Mr. Thomas Grenville, there appears the first indications of that combination against Lord Castlereagh, which, in the following summer, became so public a scandal. It was plain, that the house divided against itself could not stand; but, as Lord Grenville acknowledges in a subsequent note, there was no prospect of setting up a more durable habitation.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Boconnoc, Nov. 20, 1808.

My dearest Brother,

I am very glad to hear that the project of the publication in question is not abandoned. I own I should wish that the appendix should contain, not only the paper given in by the Catholic bishops at the time of the Union, but also a copy of the paper which Milner left with me the morning of the last debate, as an authority for what he wished me to say on the subject of the King's negative, and which, I am certain, I took care to say in the very words of his paper; though, it is possible, that in making out the notes of my speech since, I may have, in some immaterial instance, varied the words; the substance, certainly not.

This last paper I have not with me here; but it is at Dropmore, where I shall be by the 9th or 10th of next month, at latest; and if I could find there ready for me, a printed copy of the notes of my speech, I would look it over, and return it

to Mr. Dardis, with the paper I speak of; unless, on consideration, you and Tom should think that there can be; after what has passed, any impropriety in publishing such a paper, certainly not of a confidential nature. Perhaps I ought first to apprise Milner, that I mean to do so; and on this point I should much wish for your advice.

I have heard twice from Lord Holland since he has been at Corunna; in his last letter he does not enter into much details, but seems to write with less apparent confidence of success than before. My opinions, you know have, from the beginning, been desponding, and are not less so now. I enclose a note he sends me, of the plans of our army, which, however, I fear even this check of Blake will tend to disconcert.

There are details of the affair of the Vimeira in circulation, which, if they are accurate, would show that Wellesley was surprised that day, though he afterwards got well out of the scrape; and the position of his own head-quarters, and still more of the provisions of his army, in front of his encampment, is much criticised. But I know too well the facility with which such operations are criticised after the event, to let my own opinion go with these impressions, till one has heard much more.

I do not envy the members of the court of inquiry.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Boconnoc, Nov. 25, 1808.

My dearest Brother,

The enclosed from Lord Mount Edgcumbe, is more for your perusal than mine, nor do I well see why it was not in the first instance addressed to you. The objection seems reasonable enough. I also inclose you a note extracted from a letter of

Wickham's, in which he endeavours to form some estimate of the French force destined for Spain. Of these corps, which as you see amount to 30,000 men, there are not less than eight or ten already under march for that service, or arrived there.

I believe the public at last begins to share the apprehensions I long entertained for the safety of any army we send there; and if we lose that force, how is it to be replaced?

I return you Sir Arthur's letters—they make but an indifferent case for him, and I am sorry to see that public opinion runs more and more against him. There is something quite inexplicable about his protest. Are we to suppose it was all pure invention? and if so, whose?

I cannot say I am much edified with Milner's letter; on the contrary, I am more than ever desirous of publishing the few short words he authorized me (in writing) to say on the subject which contain none of these fine spun distinctions, but simply express a readiness to consent to an effectual negative. I hope to find Dardis's packet on my table at Dropmore, when I get there.

Lord Grey is still very anxious for some public declaration on our part, that we will not bring the subject forward without satisfaction on this point; but, I can give no such pledge. They have marred their own cause, but that of the country may be wrapped up in it, and if I could unite Ireland in heart and affection with England, I should not care one farthing (comparatively speaking,) how such blockheads as Milner and his colleagues were or were not appointed. Influence, it is clear, they have hardly any now, and in that case they would have none. All this I know, that the good people of England will not feel till the danger is at the door, and perhaps till all remedy is too late, and then they will run headlong the other way as they did in 1782, and never stop or strain at such trifles as these.

Lord Holland is gone to Madrid, and still writes with good hopes. The Junta is about to call the Cortes, a step necessary

in all probability, in order to obtain such exertion and sacrifices as a national representation only can call forth, but which will add much to their existing difficulties. They have also appointed a court to try persons suspected of treachery; and this measure only proves to me how much they are afraid, in case of reverses, of the establishment of revolutionary tribunals by mob authority.

You probably know that Valladolid is the point of reunion appointed for our armies. If Bonaparte is not there before any of them, we shall be more fortunate than we have reason to expect.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Boconnoc, Nov. 30, 1808.

My dearest Brother,

By the same post which brings me the impudent lies circulated in London of Blake's success, I have received to-night from Lord Holland, dated Lugo, November 20, the melancholy account that, on the 12th, after four or five days' hard fighting, Blake's army was completely defeated; that he got to Reynosa, meaning to retreat by Leon to Astorga, upon Baird's army; that the French got between him and Astorga, obliging him thereby to retreat to St. Andero, where he was on the 14th, with 8000 men of his own, and about 7000 Galicians under Romana.

He was thus entirely cut off from Baird, whose leading divisions, under Craufurd, were at Astorga the 16th, while the rear of his column had not left Corunna the 21st.

Of Moore little or nothing was known; but, if the French got to Benevente before him or Baird, the junction could not be effected without a battle.

I should hardly think all this worth sending you as supposing

you must receive it first from town, if I did not see the systematic falsehoods which the government, as foolishly, I think, as wickedly, are continually disseminating.

MR. T. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Cleveland Square, Monday, Dec. 5, 1808.

MY DEAREST BROTHER,

I enclose to you a letter which I have just received from Ebrington, and another from Henry. I fear that, in point of military struggle they will have little left to see; but Cadiz, and Gibraltar, and Malta, and Sicily are all fair objects of curiosity and of interesting pursuit; and they will be better employed in any of these chases, than in the mere domestic chase of fox and of hare.

The public do not yet know how bad everything is; and from some strange reason which I do not know how to explain, the runners of Ministers keep down the truth, and keep alive the expectation of better news. All that I hear convinces me that the Ministry know that Moore and Baird have each separately begun their retreat; the first towards Lisbon, the second, *not to Corunna, but to another point of the coast, which your cedar chest will suggest to you.* But this is as yet a state secret, which I must beg you on no account to mention till you have heard it elsewhere.

The Ministers when they speak in confidence, speak of the English war in Spain as over, and each of the Ministers begins to extend the circle of his confidential communications, which are full of complaints of each other, and which announce, beyond all disguise, the bad opinion they entertain of their own permanence. They all agree in falling foul of Lord Castlereagh, and I have heard so much, and from such good sources, of the language that I describe to you, that in ordinary times I should certainly speculate upon very

immediate and inevitable changes in the government; but as things are, I believe the King will perhaps be more afraid of the inconvenience of change than of meeting the disadvantage of the wretched set that he has got about him; at the same time this is uncertain enough, and for those who like to deal in political speculation, this is a rich time of harvest.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Dropmore, Dec. 11, 1808.

I have but just time, my dearest brother, to send you the enclosed—it is from Lord Holland. We arrived here yesterday, night, and I got this by the post of this morning.

What a melancholy close of all the high-raised expectations of the country! My hopes, you know, were never so high (nor, indeed, at all high); and, therefore, my disappointment is less. But the shame and grief I feel, in an equal degree with the most confident anticipator of Bonaparte's downfall; and in melancholy prognostics of what is to come, I believe my mind still goes faster and further than that of most other men.

I have a few lines from Tom, who announces to me three or four visits from political friends. Their visits I shall very gladly receive, but as for their politics, I am now thoroughly persuaded, that such is the state of the country, that no good can, with any reasonable expectation, be looked to. If good could be done, it is very clear to me that we shall not be called upon to do it; and this persuasion is matter of consolation to me, at a time when I so strongly doubt whether, under any call, we could do the good which, even two years ago, was problematical; and is now, I fear, desperate. I find nothing from Dalrymple.

The Wellington Despatches contain many interesting

illustrations of this crisis in the history of the Great Captain; and, in various military publications, full justice is done to the subject. Therefore, it is here only necessary to add, that a Committee of Inquiry, composed of seven officers, assembled on the 14th of November, and after examining witnesses till the 27th of the following month, agreed to a report that exonerated *all* the generals who had been implicated in the Cintra blunder. A verdict so preposterous, satisfied no one. Public opinion, that had at first, been very much against Sir Arthur Wellesley, now turned completely in his favour; yet he did not return to the Peninsula. He resumed his duties as Irish Secretary, and his place in parliament—but no longer unobserved. His successes in the Peninsula, and his evidence before the Committee of Generals in London, had satisfied many of his countrymen that he possessed military talent of the highest order; and there was, at least, one statesman in office, capable of doing him justice.

Intelligence of disasters in Spain, followed each other in rapid succession. First, the destruction of the principal Spanish armies, and then the imminent danger of the English force. The news was most disheartening; and the effect it had upon Lord Grenville may be gathered from the despairing tone of his correspondence. Rumours of ministerial changes began to be freely circulated; but, it is evident, there was no prospect for the Opposition. As far as the Grenvilles were concerned, this was of little consequence; they had long ceased to be ambitious of office.

EARL TEMPLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Wednesday, Dec. 2, 1808.

MY DEAR FATHER,

I have seen a letter from one of the heads of Baird's staff, dated head-quarters, Villa Franca, 24th ultimo. I must not mention the name, but you may depend upon the authenticity of it, and the goodness of the authority. He says "nothing can be worse than our situation, and I fear we shall be inevitably cut off." He states the defeat of Blake's army, the bad conduct of the Spanish officers, and the excellent conduct of the men; but that the defeat is complete, and that he has retreated to Leon with 10,000 men. The French, he says, have their advanced parties within three leagues of our quarters; by which I understand him to mean Astorga. The French are in force at Benevente. He estimates their force (I conclude, upon the whole line,) at 100,000 infantry and 10,000 cavalry. They have been seen reconnoitering the river in front of Benevente, and are manœuvring upon our left flank for the purpose of getting round by Oviedo—thus cutting off our retreat to Corunna. Our cavalry is completely inefficient; the men in good health, but the horses going fast. They had had, at the date of his writing, no communication with them. They were to retreat immediately from Astorga, which was not tenable upon Lugo. The country between these two places very hilly, and strongly defensible, if they could get provisions.

He writes a postscript still more desponding, in which he says, "The contest must now soon be over. If I escape alive from the field, I shall soon be in England, but our situation is almost desperate. Our general, however, will not surrender without a desperate struggle." Such was the language at Baird's head-quarters on the 24th. Romana was appointed commander-in-

chief of all the Spanish armies, and the consequent supercession of Castanos had occasioned great discontent. There is a report in town of the armies under Palafox and Castanos, having joined, and having attacked the French centre and destroyed it. This story is believed in consequence of there being letters in town from our commissioner with Palafox's army, saying that it was determined to join the two armies, and to make the attack in question. The 16th is the day which is named for this attack, but this even, if true, will not counterbalance the horrible news from our army. There is undoubted proof that the whole amount of Spaniards in arms throughout all Spain, does not exceed 100,000 men. The lower orders are violent against the French, but the gentry and higher classes take no interest whatever in the struggle.

Ever yours, dutifully and affectionately.

CH. T.

MR. T. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Cleveland Square, Dec. 14, 1808.

MY DEAREST BROTHER,

I remain persuaded, that there is nothing to be done, and that the Ministry will be botched and patched, and will not be changed; but there are several curious facts well worth attending to, and on which I should much like to hear your opinion. The account I hear of Lord Grey makes me think that his state of health alone must prevent him from attending; the whispers which I hear respecting the Prince, and the engagements he is under, if they are true, make it scarce possible for him to act. These and other motives of this sort are of themselves almost decisive against party exertion in the present moment.

No news, except the French accounts of Castanos having lost 3000 killed and 5000 prisoners; Ministers abuse Moore now for retreating.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Dropmore, Dec. 15, 1808.

MY DEAREST BROTHER,

I am called upon for my opinion as to the line to be taken in the next Session, and am most earnest to know your ideas on the subject.

The question will, perhaps, be a little varied by seeing whether this wretched puppet-show government is still presented to us as the ostensible rulers of the country, or whether it is to be changed by the addition of Melville, Wellesley, and (as Lord T. hears,) of Moira.

But in either case, my own impression strongly is, that no real good can be done. If they change hands at all, it can only be because they are quarrelling among themselves; for I am persuaded so long as the King chooses to continue them, these very men will command the majorities of both Houses with as much certainty as ever.

The only question, therefore, can be what we owe to our own characters in such a moment, and what we owe to the country in point of duty, however hopeless. But I feel a strong reluctance to these wordy wars, at a moment when the country itself has not, perhaps, two years more of existence.

Still, however, on all this I must wish to be in a great degree governed by the wishes of others, and principally of those who are nearest to me. But I am sick of politics, and entertain a most melancholy opinion of what is to come.

I believe I mentioned to you that I did not find on my arrival here, the paper which Dardis was to send. I am sorry for it, for I feel a good deal of anxiety for such a publication—not for present use, but for future reference.

LORD GRENVILLE TO EARL TEMPLE.

Dropmore, Dec. 15, 1808.

My dear Temple,

I am not at all surprised at your intelligence, though I had not heard the particulars before. Experience shows that every contrivance will be resorted to, rather than that the government should be suffered to fall into the hands of any strong and united party. And for such a patchwork as this principle requires, the individuals you mention are those who would naturally be looked to; only I do not see how Castlereagh and Mulgrave alone can make room enough for these new Ministers, unless, indeed, Lord Camden accompanies his nephew, by whom you probably know he is entirely governed.

I cannot stir from here till near the meeting, now fixed for the 19th, because I have people coming here in succession. Tierney and Lord Henry Petty (Marquis of Lansdowne) come to-morrow with my brother Tom. I heartily wish you were of the party, because we must then discuss the outlines of our general line for next Session. But they will, I fear, be gone again before this letter reaches you.

My own impressions, in which I find my brother coincides, are very much against any very active exertion. It can do no good—for I am satisfied these people, or any people, may command under the King's influence a majority in Parliament, and it would have the appearance of a struggle for power, at a time when a man must, indeed, be of a most depraved ambition, to wish for the appearance and responsibility of governing the country, with the certainty that a Court intrigue would be incessantly at work with ample means of depriving him of all power to be of real use.

These ideas, however, are subject to the opinions of friends, and I should be truly happy in an early opportunity of talking them over with you.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Dropmore, Dec. 28, 1808.

My dearest Brother,

I am terrified at these Spanish accounts. Talavera, where Bonaparte's cavalry was on the 7th or 8th, is nearer to Lisbon than Salamanca, and Moore on the 8th was moving forward, on a speculation that Madrid was to hold out; how he could think so he can best explain. ...

His retreat to Lisbon seems now cut off, and he and Baird together will be driven back upon Vigo and Corunna through a country which furnishes nothing.

Grey has had another attack, and is seriously, though I am assured not dangerously ill. I shall be nearly alone on the Opposition bench on the 19th; but there I will be.

We are getting fast into a state in which the hope of doing good by speeches in parliament, will be perfectly ridiculous.

The writer was most probably well informed on the subject of the following communication, though, apparently it was premature for serious consideration. Such speculations were not started for the first time; and the notorious mismanagement, under the King's government, may have caused more attention to be directed to the prospects of the country under a Regency. In the subsequent letter will be found some severe strictures on Mr. Canning's negotiations with the representative of the United States, respecting the Orders in Council issued by the government, in reply to the Berlin Decree.

MR. W. H. FREMANTLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Englefield Green, Dec. 29, 1808.

MY DEAR LORD,

I don't know whether you take in one of the evening papers, which I am told (for I have not seen it) contains a most singular paragraph respecting the nomination of a Regency. I have reason to think there is more truth in the story, than what generally belongs to such information in the papers. I know the subject occupies the conversation at Windsor, and a variety of circumstances lead me to think, that it has been in agitation very lately. The accident which took place in coming from London about three weeks ago, and several other circumstances, have served to strengthen whatever inclination first led to the measure. There has been a remonstrance on the part of Ministers, at the risk of coming alone weekly to town, subject to so much accident, and to such risk of health. The answer has been pettish, that if age and infirmity is so greatly increased, it would be better to surrender a situation that calls for more exertion than can be given.

With these kind of impressions, the annual Christmas visit of the Archbishop for the purpose of administering the Communion, has not lessened the effect; and the sight still diminishing, and nearly quite gone, I know there is a depression, that may lead (and I should not be surprised) if it did to this measure. I speak all this to you, from no positive information, and from no hints of individuals, but I couple the variety of things I have heard from different persons, and I am persuaded the measure has been in agitation.

Ever, most unfeignedly and affectionately yours,

W. H. F.

MR. T. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Cleveland Square, Dec. 31, 1808.

My dearest Brother,

Upon the subject of the Spanish war, you come to a bad shop when you write to me for consolation and hope. A universal madness seems to me to have seized upon the governors and governed of this country, who are talking and acting upon the state of Spain, as Cervantes would have spoken in the mouth of the hero of La Mancha. If you, who are something more sanguine than I am, was anxious at the position of Moore at Salamanca, on account of its distance from Lisbon, you will not be much tranquillised to-day at finding the glorious news of his joining Baird at Benevente, while 8000 French cavalry had taken the road towards Lisbon. I consider this as the first step of the separation of Moore from Lisbon, and my speculation is, that if Bonaparte has disposable force enough, he will interpose an army between the coast and Moore, and will then attack him whenever his retreat shall have been cut off. It looks to me as if Moore, by going to Toro, has given Bonaparte the means of cutting him off from Lisbon; how long Vigo will remain open to him, remains to be seen.

Nothing was ever like the total ignorance that seems to prevail in Spain. I have just seen a letter from Lord Holland, from Vigo, of the 14th, in which he exults in the new decision of English head-quarters to move forward, and speaks with the greatest confidence of the successful defence which Morla will make of Madrid, ten days, observe, after the capture. In my diplomatic courses, I have always found it agreed by all foreign ministers, that the Spanish couriers were the quickest in Europe; what is become of their speed and alacrity, I know not, but I know that Moore at Salamanca on the 5th, and Baird at Villafranca on the 9th, did not know of anything respecting Madrid,

except that it was making a most formidable defence, which it would become them to assist by a forward movement. I have seen letters from the army of this date, to this effect. I have likewise seen a letter from E. Capel to his brother, in which he says that they meet with daily proofs of the indisposition of the country to the English troops, that he has seen four Spaniards just hanged for secretly sending wine to the French army, that they are generally obliged to put the Alcalde between two grenadiers, before they can get him to own that any bread is to be got, and that it is then found hid or secreted. Our government being up to their chin in this scrape, are determined to be up to their eyes in it, and Spencer is going with 14,000 men, which leaves only 5000 disposable men as an army of reserve in England.

I have not been out to-day, and therefore have heard no news. Petty and Ponsonby, who have just left me, did not know any. I am glad to find they agree with me in censuring the absurd folly of Canning's letter to Pinckney, in which he declines the offer of America. Pray observe that, in this letter, he puts a negative upon Pinckney's offer to recal the embargo, if we will recal the orders in council; and he rests his objection entirely upon the ground, that if we adopt this proposal of conciliation, Bonaparte will say we did it because we could not abide the pressure of the embargo; so that the American and English merchants are gravely told that their warehouses are shut, and their commerce is suspended, not from any object of interest or hostility between America and England, but for fear that Bonaparte should interpret our reciprocal conciliation into a confession of our being unable to stand against the American embargo. Is not this below par, even for a sixth form boy? I hope Lord Grey is well enough to come to town.

There is more armour, but it is much dearer, though it is much finer. There is a very perfect and fine shirt of iron network, with sleeves, and thigh covering of the same, and a

breast-plate and helmet very like the last; but the man asks twenty-three guineas, and I suppose would take twenty. I think I should not have hesitated at fifteen guineas, as the iron shirt alone would not be dear at ten guineas. Tell me what you would have done. A long pair of beautiful old Scotch steel engraved pistols at five guineas are, as I think, not dear.

P.S. I still believe in no change whatever, till we have lost the army in Spain; and who will then be the eager competitors for the government?

I have a letter from Henry this moment arrived, dated Lisbon, 15 December, in which is the following extraordinary paragraph.

"I have just left Sir J. Craddock, who informed me he had this morning received dispatches from Sir J. Moore, dated Salamanca, 10 December, by which it appears that accounts are received by Sir D. Baird, of the immense slaughter of the French from the 4th to the 8th, who in vain attempted to take Madrid. Baird was advancing to form a junction with Moore." What can this mean?

1809.

RETREAT OF SIR JOHN MOORE—PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY INTO THE CONDUCT OF THE DUKE OF YORK—MINISTERIAL CONFEDERACY AGAINST LORD CASTLEREAGH—THE WALCHEREN EXPEDITION—THE CAMPAIGN IN THE PENINSULA—THE DEBTS OF THE PRINCESS OF WALES—QUARREL OF LORD CASTLEREAGH AND MR. CANNING—MR. PERCEVAL ATTEMPTS TO NEGOTIATE WITH LORD GRENVILLE—LORD GRENVILLE ELECTED CHANCELLOR OF THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD—THE PERCEVAL CABINET.

As if by way of punishment for the national exultation at the victories in Portugal, came the disappointment of England at the commencement of 1809, when intelligence arrived that the army sent into Spain was in full retreat, panic-stricken and disorganised, before an overwhelming French force. It now appeared that the Emperor of France had been pouring enormous reinforcements into Spain,* announcing to his troops, with his customary bitterness whenever he had occasion to refer to England, that *the hideous leopard* had polluted the soil

* According to the imperial muster rolls, quoted by Sir William Napier, the French army in Spain, in the preceding November, amounted to 335,000 effectives. By the adjutant-general's return of the 19th December, Sir John Moore's force was 23,583 of all arms.

of Spain, and insisting that he should be driven into the sea. This object seemed about to be accomplished by the French armies, which had nearly succeeded in surrounding Sir John Moore, and were now endeavouring to prevent his escape. Officials, whose duty it was to keep the commanders acquainted with the number and movements of the French armies, constantly misled them with false intelligence, after allowing themselves to be the dupes of the enemy's spies.

As the truth became known in England, the anxiety of the more reflecting grew daily more intense. Very few were sufficiently sanguine to think that "out of the nettle danger," there existed any hand capable of plucking "the flower safely;" the nettles had become so dense—the flower apparently so unapproachable; and that small circle cherishing the recollection of Roliça and Vimeiro, continued to look in the direction of the member for Rye, as though he alone could accomplish the required grasp. He, however, at the opening of the Session, was seen in his undistinguished place on the back benches, in the House of Commons, proceeding in the routine of his office, apparently as though he could not entertain an idea beyond the sphere of its duties.

The impression created by the bad news that came from the seat of war, is made sufficiently distinct in the communications of Mr. Grenville; if it made the government or the King, as is alleged, speculate upon a Regency, both probably anticipated news still more unfavourable. The concluding sentences of the letter are written in that admirable spirit which has so often been found bursting

from the trammels of partizanship, and which claims a higher appreciation from its rarity among the political cotemporaries of the writer. The tactics of Opposition, at this juncture, are described in a subsequent communication from the same pen.

MR. T. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Cleveland Square, Jan. 10, 1809.

DEAREST BROTHER,

I do not know of any additional news since the arrival of that of the day before yesterday, but I think it not unimportant to tell you, that I have had the opportunity of knowing that, although all the papers resound only with the praises of our cavalry and the capture of General Le Fevre, the accounts are really such as have thrown all the Ministers into the greatest dismay and consternation, and that the opinion in truth is that there is very little chance left of saving the army; indeed, if it be true that the French in any force were within four Spanish leagues of Astorga on the 31st, you will see how desperate must be a retreating march of 40,000 men for 200 miles. My only hope is, that the rumour of the French may have outrun their real movements, and it is whispered to me that part of Moore's information on this subject, rests upon the information of his prisoner, Le Fevre; if so, what gives us a possible chance is that Lady Hood yesterday sent me word, that Sir Samuel had just written to her to say that he had found eight sail of the line and three hundred transports under his command at Vigo. This dreadful danger, however, has shaken the nerves of the government, and they begin to feel doubtful of their situation.

I still incline to think that they may go on, unless the King shall be so affected with this as to entertain the idea of a Regency, which has lately been much talked of. Our friends will become more eager for active measures on all these accounts; my view

is directly the reverse, and in proportion as the public danger increases, the propriety of our taking a more reserved course seems to me to increase likewise. This is not a time to be seen pressing forward into office and power. No man can do any good, and no set of men can do any good, unless they are supported by the favourable opinion of the country, and that will not be gained by following the impulses of party violence in such a moment. I hope to see no friend of mine in any new government, without being rather called to it than pressing for it, and without the unfettered exercise of his own discretion in all that relates to Ireland as well as England; the task even then would be difficult enough, but without the support of the country and of the King, even then it would be a tremendous and frightful charge.

MR. T. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Cleveland Square, Jan. 14, 1809.

My dearest Brother,

A good deal of discussion has taken place respecting what was best to be said and done in the two Houses; and the solution of the difficulties is thought to be best found in this arrangement, viz.: that Lord Grenville in the House of Lords will recapitulate some leading points, such as Portugal and Spain, and America, as objects which will command his attendance, and therefore that his statement will not be that of secession with the above exceptions, but will describe the exclusive pre-eminence of these important topics of public debate.

In the House of Commons, it is not meant to make any special declaration; but the present idea is to have a meeting at Ponsonby's, the day before the King's speech, in which Ponsonby will hold nearly the same language as Lord Grenville means to use, dwelling upon the importance of reserving the strength of the party for the above leading questions, and deprecating a

waste of strength and public patience in too minute and harrassing a course of questions. It seems the opinion, that if this address of Ponsonby's to his meeting on Wednesday might be supported by a few words from Lord Henry Petty, and from myself to the same effect, all will be done that can be done upon this subject; and though I do not covet the part allotted to me, I am content if it is supposed to be useful.

If Lord Temple is with you, pray shew him this. I wish he had been in town—for I have a large House of Commons dinner to-morrow—to talk this over.

No news from the continent. The Duke of York has recovered his spirits, and talks confidently of Moore's retreat. He admits that the French cavalry now up with Moore, is 8000 to 2000, and that the French infantry are above 60,000, but he makes himself certain that the rear of our infantry is two days before the van of the French infantry.

Even supposing this, the immense superiority in numbers of the French cavalry will, I fear, so harass Moore's march, as to give time for the French infantry to come up.

Ministers consider Morla as a traitor.

Robinson moves in the House of Commons, seconded by Blachford. Their letters are said to be discouraging in point of attendance. The city are stark mad, and drink a continuance of the American embargo!

MR. T. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Cleveland Square, Jan. 18, 1809.

DEAREST BROTHER,

There is no news; for although the guns are firing, they announce only his Majesty's birth-day, and not as yet any second edition of the Convention of Cintra. I am not as sanguine as you are, as to Moore's escape. His rear-guard consists of 6000 infantry, including his own regiment, and

1200 cavalry, but as the French have 8000 cavalry actually up with this rear-guard, I think the result is very questionable.

Our hopes of entire union for the first day are at an end, for a letter yesterday from Whitbread to Ponsonby, announced his feeling it to be an indispensable duty to move a very long amendment to the address. Ponsonby, however, is stout and means to tell the meeting to-night that no amendment will be moved, and I and Lord H. Petty intend to say a few words at the meeting to the same effect. Whitbread must then take his own separate course, for he leaves us no option but to follow him, or to separate. Lord H. Petty means to try this morning to bring Whitbread to reason, but I have no confidence in, and no great desire for, his success. I am rather amused meanwhile with hearing that Burdett has too a speech, and an amendment of his own, or of Horne Tooke's to move to-morrow; so that there is stirring enough; but what perilous times are these for such childish sports!

MR. T. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Cleveland Square, Jan. 19, 1809.

A letter is this moment brought to me from Henry from Lisbon, of the 3rd January. He describes great alarm at Lisbon from 2000 French cavalry having appeared at Truxillo and Merida, but says that news came on the 1st, at night, that they had marched northward, and it was hoped this might be from some success of Moore. He describes Craddock to have 7000 men, including the Germans and the 14th Dragoons, which he keeps for the defence of Lisbon and which are ordered to be always in readiness to march to take post at Sacarem, on the Tagus, two leagues from Lisbon. The Portuguese troops are obliged to be raised by conscription, and he describes even these levies advancing very slowly. He means to embark for Cadiz on the 4th, and as the wind is fair, he hopes

to reach Cadiz in thirty-six hours, and considers that as a safe port, from the ready retreat which he will have to Gibraltar.

' He speaks in the strongest terms of Craddock's kindness to him; but he does not name Ebrington or Neville. I take for granted, however, that Ebrington will either remain with the 14th, or will go by Vigo or Corunna to meet Moore; for he cannot safely move towards him by land.

Our meeting at Ponsonby's went off very prosperously. I supported him in a few words, and so did Lord H. Petty, and nobody else said a syllable, so that as much good has been done upon that subject as can be done, though I do not think it capable of much.

The cold is so intense, that I shall only stay a couple of hours in the House to show myself, and shall then come home. I have not heard whether more news is come by the ship from Lisbon, but I think there can be nothing known there which we do not know at least a week before the good people of Lisbon.

The miserable termination of the Spanish expedition at last became known, the loss of such a general officer as Sir John Moore and the diminution of the force he had commanded, by upwards of 4000 men, were the first fruits of its mismanagement. The mischief seemed at first irremediable from the moral effect our misfortune was likely to produce throughout the continent, as well as on the British troops. It possessed, however, one advantage, which, stupendous as was the evil, counterbalanced it: it caused attention to be more generally directed to the only man in England capable of rescuing the nation from its peril, and raising it from its humiliation. A powerful influence was being exerted in

his favour, under the direction of the only member of the government who appeared conscious of his value.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Camelford House, Jan. 23, 1809.

My dearest Brother,

The courier will probably tell you quite as distinctly as I can, all that Lord Paget has brought. He has no dispatches; the ship with them ran foul of another in the harbour of Corunna, and is not arrived.

The army arrived, as you know, at Corunna before the transports. On the 16th everything was preparing for the embarkation, and a great part had embarked. The 4th, 42nd and 50th were stationed on the heights to cover it. These were attacked at 3 o'clock in the evening, by 9 or 10,000 men, under Junot. The 42nd suffered severely; the action lasted four hours, when the Guards were brought up to support them, and by a charge with bayonets, routed the enemy, and the attack was not renewed. In the course of that night, the troops were all embarked except about 3000, and the embarkation of these was seen going on the next morning, from the ship in which Paget was.

Moore, as you will have seen, was killed, and Baird mortally wounded;* only three other officers are spoken of, and their names you will see in all the papers. Proby is not mentioned, and, therefore, I trust, is safe. I have heard nothing of Ebrington, who could not, however, have joined Moore.

Four thousand men under Crawford marched to Vigo, and were safely embarked there.

Paget describes the disorder of the retreat as extreme; of 3500 horses, 3000 lost; and above 5000 men before this last action, in which we lost 500 or 600.

* Sir David Baird survived till 1829.

Ebrington left Lisbon the 29th, to find his way by Almeida to Moore.

It is understood that the troops are all coming to Falmouth and Portsmouth.

LORD BULKELEY TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Stanhope Street, Five o'Clock, Monday,
Jan. 23, 1809.

DEAR LORD BUCKINGHAM,

There has been a battle on the embarkation of our army at Corunna, in which our people behaved most gallantly, but we have lost five or six hundred men, and Sir John Moore, and Sir D. Baird, Lieutenant-Colonel Napier, Lieutenant-Colonel Winch, and another lieutenant-colonel. The account of the subalterns is not yet come to hand. Lord Paget brought the account, and Major Berkeley Paget; the former is very ill from bodily and mental fatigue. All the baggage is lost, and all the horses, and I hear our people have brought nothing back but the clothes on their backs. The scene of insubordination they say latterly was disgraceful, but a retreating army, especially with the two commanders killed, I hear is subject to such vagaries. But of 35,000, I am told only 20,000 have escaped. Junot commanded the particular attack, and was they say ordered by Bonaparte to repair his disgraceful Convention in Portugal. There are some flourishes about Cadiz, but our army must first come home to get shirts and shoes, and I believe, arms. All this makes no difference at head-quarters—"what, what, what!" And you may rely on it, not a link will fall out of the chain of the Ministry. I fancy they are all sworn to live and die Ministers. There will be a badger in the House to-day, on the thanks to Sir Arthur Wellesley. They said the King protects Burrard, but has ordered Sir Hew Dalrymple to be run down. *Soit fait comme il est désiré.* A new army must now be got from the militia *pour encourager les autres.* It really is lament-

able to witness all these things, and to see no remedy; but all is motion within and without the two Houses of Parliament, and at head-quarters; and one is thought treasonable if one blames or doubts. Best regards attend you and your fireside.

Yours faithfully (in haste),

W. B.

LORD BULKELEY TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Stanhope Street, Jan. 25, 1809, Wednesday.

DEAR LORD BUCKINGHAM,

I have just had your letter, and I really am sorry to have nothing pleasant to send you, but evil after evil presses and the misfortune is there is no remedy; for the King, who has power in his hands, alone does not seem disposed to alter his system, and provided the Grenvilles are kept out of power, and his own choice of ministers established, all antidotes to the Bonaparte career and poison are to be put quite out of the question. The consequence of all this is, that the Republicans are gaining ground every hour, and they will push Ministers confoundedly hard in the House of Commons—not in numbers, perhaps, but in the sort of language and motions, which will be sure to succeed *ad captandum vulgus*. Whitbread seems to take the lead, and there are about twenty members, some with abilities, who are urging him to act for himself, and to make a hit at abuses and to support reforms.

I see plainly Lord Grenville will not be able now to keep these full cry hounds within his lash, which he might have done at one time, had the King given him his fair confidence. Ponsonby or Lord H. Petty, or Tierney, or whoever leads the Constitutional Opposition, will I think be soon confoundedly embarrassed how to act with Whitbread and the *enragés*, for these last will certainly acquire some popularity in proportion to the increase of public calamity, and fears, and difficulties of every description,

which every hour will press more and more on the people, from the ignorance, rashness, and want of success of the Ministers, to which I may add an unfeelingness that never had its equal even in France. Lord Castlereagh goes on as if nothing had happened, and Perceval seems only desirous to fritter down the Finance Committee, out of which I fancy Sumner will be soon squeezed, and every member that has presumed to ask what old Commodore Johnston used to call a finishing question.

The Republicans certainly push Steele hard, and Ministry particularly. Charles Long endeavours to throw the blame from his own shoulders on Lord Temple's. They say Sir John Moore was quite desperate at last, and exposed his person evidently with a wish of being killed and being dead. You have judged most sensibly in anticipating that *all all all all all all all all all all,* will be laid on his shoulders, for "dead men can tell no tales."

I assure you, my dear Lord Buckingham, I can see light in no one quarter, while the fountain head remains immoveable, and any attempts to what they call forcing the Cabinet would not succeed, nor do I see the least chance of any attempts at any change or alteration, till it is too late, and an angel from Heaven could not apply any remedy. The Court and Pitt's ghost parties are very powerful and very inveterate against Lord Grenville, under the pretence of his having joined Fox, but in reality, because they dread his honesty, his integrity, and his talents, and they will spit in their hands and hold fast, and I fancy will not even admit either Melville or Wellesley. In the meantime, depend on it, the Republicans will gain ground, and fairly speaking, who can wonder at it.

If you take in the "Morning Post," you will see how they rate the late Sir J. Moore already. I hear they talk of sending more men to the south of Spain, and that the Guards are under orders already, but I dare say treachery will give Cadiz to the French, and they say *Morla the traitor* has engaged to get Dupont's army prisoners there, liberated, and all other French

prisoners. I don't, however, vouch for this speculation. Sir John Moore, with his dying breath, sent some affectionate remembrances to Lady Hester Stanhope, and to some few military friends, among whom was General Edward Paget, and they say Lady Hester is inconsolable with his and her brother's death. I just hear that young Cavendish, young Waldegrave and young Duckinfield, and many men, have been lost in two transports. In short, there is no end to calamities. The army is to be increased immediately from the militia, and we are to go on as if nothing had happened, in "vigour and perseverance." Lord Essex, who has just called, says that there is a devil of a clamour in the returning army against the Ministry, but I don't believe it will have any consequences; I really should not be surprised at it. I write to you as these times require, honestly and frankly, for we must not shut our eyes to the true state of things, unpleasant as it is. I give you my opinions, but I don't vouch for their infallibility, and I hope something may yet turn out to whiten my black picture. I sincerely hope you are better. Our best regards attend you and yours.

Yours truly,

B.

ADMIRAL BERKELEY TO EARL TEMPLE.

Lisbon, Feb. 14, 1809.

My dear Lord,

Since my arrival, I have had occasion to reconnoitre all the positions round this town and its environs, and to my utter dismay and astonishment, find that the French had not even thought or begun upon any works on the heights, much less that any such existed capable of stopping the British army's pursuit; so that every fact which comes out, makes the horrible Convention of Cintra appear in a less defensible state. The conversation of Junot on his passage home with Captain Percy,

corroborated all which we see, and all which awakened the feelings of disgust in England. He stated that his whole dependence was upon the ability of Kellerman's negotiating talents, for that he was beaten so completely, that had the British army pursued him two miles farther, his men would have thrown down their arms and surrendered. They were not only beat, but their minds subdued, and every hope taken from them; they feared to retreat to Lisbon, as the inhabitants would have butchered them, and they had not a fort or entrenchment to retire to, except St. Julien's, which only held 1200 men. Such is the real state of the Convention, and what could have induced the officers to make it, was a matter of astonishment to him.*

I did not write to you by the last post as I really was so taken up with the very arduous and unpleasant duty which has fallen to my lot, that I scarcely had time to write a line to your father, but he will tell you all which I had wrote. Our situation here is a most unpleasant one, as no steps have been taken, or orders received to defend Portugal; all our views have been directed to the means of evacuating it, as a complete want of communication has prevented our knowing anything of the motions of Moore's army, or the progress of the French arms in Spain. We are now ready, and I have prepared everything for a magnificent retreat; a measure which undoubtedly need not be resorted to, if the Portuguese government had been more alive to their situation, and had ours not slumbered over the possibility of events, and given the proper orders and assistance in time. As it is, at the moment I am writing, the dreadful news of Moore's death and all the disasters of that army are again revived, and I am afraid confirmed. This, of course, you will know the truth of sooner than we do here; but, if it is true, our troubles begin, as I have no doubt, the French army will

* See ante page 266.

bend its steps this way—the object of driving the English away from the continent being too near Bonaparte's heart, not to take advantage of the moment to effect it.

I have no orders where to go, nor any ship to go in; but if I am obliged to return to England, shall certainly have a tale to tell. I think, however, I shall proceed to Cadiz although out of my command, as the most convenient port to receive a squadron without provisions, stores, or rigging; the first being supplied us from the army, and the others expended and worn out. The packet which goes to-night is the only vessel from England since our arrival; therefore it may be possible that some documents for our conduct, or vessels of war may be on their passage. Give our best love to Lady Temple,

And believe me ever yours most affectionately,

G. B.

MR. W. H. FREMANTLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Stanhope Street, Jan. 26, 1809.

My dear Lord,

Every hour brings fresh details of the dreadful confusion and loss of our army. The troops embarked without order or arrangement of any kind; men and officers of different brigades, and of different regiments, all mingled; and at this moment an utter impossibility of saying who is saved and who is lost. Poor William Cavendish is certainly gone, which vacates Aylesbury, and young Waldegrave, which is the second son Lady Waldegrave has had drowned. The consternation in the public mind, still prevails. Castlereagh's manner and language last night was perfectly correct and proper, both in his proposition respecting the Spanish army, and the Vimeira thanks. In the former, he distinctly acquitted Moore of all possible construction of blame that might attach upon the measure of his advance, and of his ultimate decision of retreat; which, after the language of

the "Morning Post," was most satisfactory, and which Henry Petty very ably and dexterously pledged the government to. This, I know, is not their private sentiments, at least, among them all. With respect to Wellesley, it was quite an unanimous feeling in the House; and I am very glad I judged your wishes. I felt myself very lucky in the manner in which I was enabled to express myself on this question. On Lord Castlereagh's plan for the increase of the army, a good deal was said, and well said by Tierney; but we had an instance of the old story of last year, by an unnecessary and very ill-judged division provoked and insisted upon by Creevey. I was not in it, as I have determined, knowing it is yours, as well as the wish of all your friends, not to lend myself to this constant and unpopular scene of contention.

I think we shall divide at least 130 on the Cintra Convention. I wish you or Lord Temple would write to Shipley to come up for it, and also to Charles Williams.

The troops are embarking at Lisbon, and I trust, in time. What will become of the two regiments at Elvas and Almeida, I know not. The Ministers have altered their tone with respect to future embarkations; but Castlereagh said last night in one phrase, "the events which have *hitherto* followed our armaments."

There are fresh accounts of a victory at Saragossa, in which it is said 4000 French are destroyed. This can only lead to greater submission. I hope you have had a pamphlet, which I mentioned to Lord Temple, and of which I begged him to take half a dozen to Stowe. It is published by Ridgway, and called a "Letter from a Member of Parliament."

Mrs. Fremantle has heard of her boy on board at Corunna, but nothing beyond. Of course our suspense is not yet subsided. I hope to God you will find much benefit from Bath.

Believe me always,
Most truly and affectionately yours,
W. H. Fremantle.

LORD BULKELEY TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Stanhope Street, Jan. 26, 1809.

DEAR LORD BUCKINGHAM,

A friend of mine who goes about a great deal, and mixes with different people, tells me that all the late catastrophe sinks deep in public opinion; but I don't think anything will come of it to occasion any change that can give us any fair prospects. I really believe 19,000 is the very outside number of our army, who have returned from Vigo and Corunna, and they have brought nothing back besides, for everything else, and every other life has fallen into the enemy's hands, and it is impossible not to disguise the truth, that 10,000, 11,000, or 12,000 lives have been sacrificed. It will be a miracle if the misfortunes stop here, for the French are certain to attack our army in Portugal. Poor Lord and Lady Fortescue, they must have aching hearts. Phipps, the oculist, was with the King when the late despatches had been read to him, and he said to him, "Man proposes, God disposes."

They say to-day that Lord Wellesley is to come in with *carte blanche*, and has been waiting only for a whitewash for Sir Arthur in the thanks of both Houses. Canning, in that case, I should suppose will resign, as he has hitherto been the Phaeton who has driven the Chariot of the Sun in a higher hand than any of the others. They say in consequence of this notion, that 100,000 men are to be sent to the south of Spain, and that the old militia is to be enlisted, who are no doubt, as Lord Castlereagh said in the House, panting to gather fresh laurels in that country. An old friend of mine, a great toad of the present Ministers, and a great hater of the last, told me to-day, gravely, that good came out of evil, for how could the refuse population be better disposed of than in fighting the battles of the country. Such and such unfeeling beastly sayings are those of many very many others of the same description of men.

The newspapers sounded the pulse of the public yesterday, and some little time before as to laying all blame on Sir John Moore, but that nail would not drive, and they say Lord Henry Petty made a most beautiful speech yesterday in reprobation of that attempt. Fremantle rather thinks a ferment of public opinion is waking up, so as to give a chance of a radical change of men and measures, but I own I differ with him, and have only to hope he is right and I am wrong. Perceval and Castlereagh take the whole thing very coolly; Mulgrave and Westmoreland bawl out faction; Camden shakes his head like Lord Burleigh in the 'Critic;' Canning is like a madman they say; Bathurst and Chatham full of *sang froid*, and so is Eldon; Liverpool they say looks sad, wretched, and thoughtful; but at head-quarters,* there is true courage and firmness, supported by a mind conscious of virtue, patriotism, and rectitude, as my refuse population friend assured me, and all the courtiers join in this cry. I think I have given you a good dose. The bell rings. So

Dear Lord Buckingham,

Yours truly,

B.

Two outward bound Indiamen are lost on the Goodwin Sands, and seven lives only saved.

Parliament assembled on the 19th of January, when Lord Grenville, during the debate on the address in the House of Lords, expressed disapproval of the management of the Spanish expedition, and of ministerial misconduct in other directions, in which he was followed by Earl Moira and Lord Erskine. The same day, Mr. Ponsonby, Lord Henry Petty, and Mr. Whitbread, made a spirited attack upon the government in the House of Commons, but

* The King.

without any apparent result. Ministers, however, acknowledged the influence of public opinion on the 23rd, when the Earl of Liverpool moved the thanks of the House to Sir Arthur Wellesley and the officers under his command, for the victories he had gained in the preceding August. Two days afterwards the same motion was made in the Commons by Lord Castlereagh, and carried, after a fruitless attempt to include Sir Harry Burrard in the vote, made by Mr. Whitbread, who now began to take an independent line in Opposition.

The most startling event of the month took the shape of a motion submitted to the House of Commons by Mr. (better known as Colonel) Wardle, on the 27th, relative to the state of the army, and the conduct of the Commander-in-chief. Although Sir Arthur Wellesley chivalrously bore testimony to the Duke of York's attention to his army, and the Secretary at War, and Chancellor of the Exchequer, appeared satisfied that the result of an inquiry would be entirely exculpatory of his Royal Highness, the charges put forth by Mr. Wardle of advancing officers at the sole recommendation of two infamous women (Mrs. Clarke and Mrs. Carey), who received for such promotions one half the value of each commission, created a most injurious impression, which increased with the progress of the inquiry. Some of the Ministers went great lengths in defence of the Duke. Perceval said, "he would stake his reputation upon it, that it was impossible, that after the result of the inquiry, *any suspicion even* could attach to his Royal Highness."*

* Hansard's Parliamentary Debates, Vol. XII, p. 196.

Sir Samuel Romilly, a moderate man, has left on record his impressions of this case, which are not so favourable.* The share he took in the inquiry excited the admiration of one of the most distinguished of his cotemporaries, Sir James Mackintosh, who has stated: "I do envy him so noble an opportunity of proving his disinterestedness."

EARL TEMPLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Kirkham's Hotel, Lower Brook Street,
Feb. 3, 1809.

MY DEAR FATHER,

You will of course, have heard of Lord Melville's being sent for. The fact is certain, and he goes to the Queen's House to-morrow, if the King comes to town. Doubts exist as to the ultimate result of this, and some people think that an entire new government is to be the result of it, and not a patch. I have no doubt that an entire new government would please him better, if he could put himself at the head of it, but that rather than not come in at all, he will patch with anything and anybody. Whatever turn this takes, it must be favourable to us. The present government is certainly falling very fast in the public estimation. The debate of the last night but one when Whitbread moved his amendment, gave as I understand, ample proof of it. With all the advantage which the division in Opposition gave the Ministers, they could not even with the assistance of Canning's best jokes and manner, raise a single cheer upon the subject of Spain, or the propriety of sending fresh troops there. In fact, I understand the public mind to have undergone a great change upon that subject, owing to the very decided opinions expressed by every officer who has returned.

* Memoirs. Vol. II., p. 270.

The Duke of York's business has taken a very unpleasant shape. The woman has taken a decided part against him, and tells everything she knows, a great deal that she does not know, and much more than the Duke can repel. The temper of the House is decidedly in the Duke's favour; this, added to the bad character of the principal witness, will certainly bring him off upon the most material points of the charge, but nothing can wipe off from the public mind the first impression of connivance, at least, which the bad character of the woman only tends to strengthen and confirm. In short, whatever be the issue of the specific charges brought, I see plainly that the Duke is lost in public estimation. The woman is very clever, and completely foiled Gibbs in a very severe cross-examination of three hours. Adam made the matter worse, by stating that the Duke had given her an annuity of £400, contingent upon her correctness of conduct. What does this mean? Was it to depend upon her being a w—— or not? That cannot be, because from the streets he took her, and to the streets he returned her. Will not then his enemies say, and can his friends deny, that the annuity was hush-money, to continue so long as she held her tongue, and to cease the moment she began to talk. And this will be confirmed by the fact, that the moment she began to talk, the payment did cease. All this is very bad, and at the present moment very mischievous.

Ministers are very much frightened about Ireland, and it is suspected that the force pretended to be collected for the King of Spain, will be sent to Ireland, if Bonaparte, as they suspect he will, gets to Cadiz before we do. As far as I can collect, the Duke d'Infantado has nothing with him like an army. God bless you. I shall get into my house in a few days, in the meanwhile direct here.

Ever dutifully and affectionately yours.

MR. W. H. FREMANTLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Stanhope Street, Feb. 6, 1809.

MY DEAR LORD,

Lord Melville went to the levee yesterday, the Ministers say with no other pretext whatever but to thank for the peerage to Lord Hopetown. His friends insinuate other motives, and a secret understanding with the King; but I am fully satisfied it was nothing but an experiment on his part, and which will fail. I cannot see any one object that could be derived to the government by the introduction of Lord Melville into their councils, but a great deal to be acquired by him. The former even say the peerage was not given on account of the latter, but as a recompense to General Hope, on whom it is entailed.

The King has written a note from Windsor, in the course of last week, in which he says, "He laments the disgraceful connections which appear to have been formed by the Duke of York, but acquits him (even in suspicion on his part) of criminality in his official conduct." I hear the Duke of York is dreadfully affected by the whole business, which he may well be. His friends have done him more harm than his accusers. We are to have another disgusting scene to-night. The House of Commons, I think, has suffered, and will suffer, as much in reputation as the Duke himself. I think we shall make a very good division on Monday. I cannot reckon less (and I have gone over the list with Tierney) than one hundred and forty, or near one hundred and fifty; and I am sure some of their friends will keep back, indeed I know of three or four.

Every day brings forward fresh details of the dreadful confusion and suffering on our retreat to Corunna, and I am afraid there was as much misconduct in the officers as in the men. Frederick Hervey is just arrived, completely worn-down

and almost dead. The 20th were employed, during the whole retreat, in keeping up the stragglers; and, of course, the duty was most severe and painful. Only conceive, this regiment took its departure from Elvas, from whence it marched nearly 800 miles, and never once, during the whole time, saw a Spanish soldier, or fired a British musket. It was in the affair of Corunna, but not engaged.

You may be assured this affair was not considered by the army engaged in it, as, at all, a battle of very great brilliancy; nor, indeed, as a general battle; Moore's object, in the first instance, was merely to employ one brigade, namely, Lord W. Bentinck, in making a defence to cover the embarkation; and the other troops were drawn into it by hearing the firing, and many of the regiments went without orders, and took their position wherever they thought best; and until Hope's letter appeared, and the people in this country were impressed with the magnitude of this victory, the army had never so considered it themselves.

I don't mean by this to say it was not well fought, and most material to the security of the embarkation, but it certainly was not a combined and regularly fought battle, and very great confusion prevailed. I have had letters from Lisbon of the 21st, there are others as late as the 27th. The French had not been heard of nearer than Terra la Reyna. Of course they must come away, but I very much believe our Ministers are foolish enough to make an attempt at Cadiz. It is quite clear they do not expect anything from it, but they do it for the purpose of keeping up the attention of this country.

The business of the Duke of York is a most fortunate tub, thrown out for the occupation of the public; it has quite diverted the public mind from Spanish, or any other affairs, and I really think Ministers have encouraged it with that view. It is, however, a most melancholy diversion, and may lead, which I much fear it will, to most serious consequences.

Lord Cholmondely is dying—a mortification in his leg; I understand he cannot recover. Lord Temple tells me you go to Bath to-morrow; I hope, with all my heart, you will find benefit from the waters. I will write to you as events occur.

Believe me ever, my dear Lord,
With most unfeigned attachment,
Yours most faithfully and affectionately,
W. H. Fremantle.

EARL TEMPLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

House of Commons, Friday, Feb., 1809.
Five o'Clock.

My dear Father,

The papers will have told you what passed last night, and the manner in which Perceval trusting to a paper being destroyed, and consequently believing he might say what he pleased about it, drew out a document which alone would have damned the Duke of York. At the same time, however, that the messengers seized the paper in question at Sandon's lodging, they brought a parcel of letters from Mrs. Clarke to Sandon, which were submitted for inspection to a select committee. The report is not yet made, but Leach, the chairman, has told me that the scene of infamy they open is dreadful, and that all that has passed is a trifle when compared with them. A complete system of traffic of every sort, for votes in the House upon particular questions—Pitt's Defence Bill, &c.—for every sort of military appointment, is laid open—a statement of particular facts which could only have come to her knowledge from the Duke of York; repeated directions to Sandon to call at the office, where he will find such and such official letters for him. A complaint on the part of the Duke that she has not been dealt fairly by in consequence of a person for whom she has interested herself, having made interest elsewhere; all this and much more is exposed in these cursed papers. In

short, Leach, who is a cool-headed and well-judging man, says all is over, and though before he did not think corruption was made out, he cannot say so now. The ferment is hourly and formidably increasing, and when the letters are read, will augment tenfold. What will be the consequence, God knows. I have not time to write more as the report is going to be made.

Ever dutifully and affectionately yours,

The Militia Bill has never been printed since the Committee, but it is pretty nearly an exact counterpart of the former Bill. The measure for recruiting the militia will be made matter of a separate Bill. If the Bill is printed in your House I will send it you.

MR. W. H. FREMANTLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Stanhope Street, Feb. 16, 1809.

My dear Lord,

The scene which is going on in the House of Commons is so disgusting, and at the same time so alarming, that I hardly know how to describe it to you. Every day and every hour adds to the evidence against the Duke of York, and it is quite impossible but that he must sink under it. Undoubtedly as yet, there is no proof brought home of his participation in the pecuniary transactions, or of his knowledge of them, but the full and complete exertion of his influence to the object of Mrs Clarke, fixed so decidedly upon him by his own letters, and those of General Clavering, is a fact so strong and incontrovertible, that it must overwhelm him; and when we add to this, the most scandalous and disgraceful appointment of his w——'s footman to a commission in the army, fixed upon him by the letters of the man (now in evidence) and the man identified as a menial servant known to him at the time, by the evidence of his brother servants;

this above all other circumstances, is so strong and glaring a case, and such a scandalous and flagrant misuse of his power, and such a stigma upon his character, that if there were no other circumstances, I am persuaded it would be sufficient to condemn him.

I cannot say what a deep and serious impression these proceedings have made upon the House, and upon the people in London. The cry against the Duke of York is rising fast, and God knows where it is to end. To attempt to justify him is now quite impossible; though of course, no opinion will be given until the whole of the evidence is gone through, and before the House, and till it is seen what steps the government mean to take upon it. I have reason to think that the King is violently angry with them, and has expressed himself to this effect; I think you will judge my authority good when I tell you, that this information was given me by Greenwood, whose language was not measured towards them; indeed, they deserve it richly, for never was there such an instance of lamentable incapacity and want of foresight and decision. It was quite impossible even from the first notice of this business, not to foresee that an examination at the bar of the House, must lead to an exposure of all the scenes of profligacy, debauchery and folly, which no one could be ignorant the Duke of York had been guilty of; but even if he had not so exposed himself, still the bringing a common ———— to the bar, to accuse the King's son and Commander-in-chief, was a gross and culpable and infamous proceeding, and what could never have happened, but under such a government as now exists in the House of Commons. The consequences are incalculable, for it involves now the very existence and security of the monarchy and the parliament, and I may add of every constituted authority. How the parliament is to decide is most difficult to foresee, but one thing is quite certain; namely, that it is almost impossible any decision which it makes can be satisfactory to the country, or can maintain its credit and reputation.

All power and influence of Perceval in the House is quite

gone by; he speaks without authority and without attention paid to him; and Canning has made two or three such rash declarations that he is as little attended to. You may judge the situation of the House, when I tell you we were last night nearly three-quarters of an hour debating about the evidence of a drunken footman, by Perceval suggesting modes of ascertaining how to convict him of his drunkenness. Charles Long, near whom I was sitting, telling me at the time what a lamentable proof it was, of the want of some man of sense and judgment to lead the House. There is no government in the House of Commons. You may be assured the thing does not exist, and whether they can ever recover their tone of power remains to be proved; at present, Mr. Croker, Mr. D. Brown, and Mr. Beresford are the leaders. Of course, while this ferment lasts, and God knows when it is to end, no attention will be paid to any other subject. The Cintra Convention, or the general campaign, or the American question, are minor considerations, and indeed, do not enter into the consideration of any one. The former, it is hoped, however, will come on, on Friday next, and our division will be large. I think I understate it, when I say one hundred and fifty. I have made out full that number now actually in town, and I have not included the Northumberlands, who vote with us upon it: many of their—the Minister's—friends are gone out of town, purposely to avoid voting upon it, and we shall have some rats.

The general idea of the intention of Ministers respecting the Duke of York is this; that they move a resolution acquitting him completely of all knowledge or participation of the money transactions; secondly, a very strong resolution expressive of the sense of the country, of the excellent and well-organised state of the army, and the great improvement which has been made in it, under the management and conduct of the Duke of York, and there it is meant to end. This will, of course, be followed by Lord Folkestone, or some other man, with a resolution, expressing the regret of the House of the proofs which

appear by evidence before it, of the gross and culpable influence which appears to have been practised by the Duke of York, at the instigation of his kept mistress, to the detriment and disgrace of the army. I should think the motion of an address to remove him will not be attempted; but it would not surprise me, indeed I think it very likely he will resign before a division takes place.

The opinion of Lord Grenville, expressed in the following communication, is a fair report of the estimation in which he was held by his political friends. At this period, when the ministerial errors of his rivals had become so prominent, his sagacity and prudence must have appeared to great advantage. Their last mistake—their sanction of the public inquiry into the conduct of the Duke of York—as may be seen by the following details, caused them very great embarrassment.

LORD BULKELEY TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Stanhope Street, Saturday, Feb. 18, 1809.

DEAR LORD BUCKINGHAM,

We had a good day yesterday in the Lords, and I had the honour and pleasure of bearing your's and Lord Fortescue's proxies; and we divided, proxies included, ninety to one hundred and fifteen. Lord Grenville spoke incomparably—rather too long; but he was obliged to go much into detail, and to quote and refer a great deal. Lords Bathurst and Liverpool answered. The former I never heard before, and he really exceeded my expectation; but they both accused Lord Grenville, and the Opposition ,of taking the part of America against this country, and by their speeches and writings, encouraging the Americans in the measures they were pursuing; and Lord Liverpool made some allusion to the Stamp Act. Lord Grenville's reply was

beyond expression, good, and not too long, in his best manner, dignified and animated; and I really now begin to think the clouds of bigotry and folly, and blindness and trick, which have obscured and besotted the public from looking to Lord Grenville, begin to disperse, and that he stands higher and higher every succeeding hour, as one of the last anchors and hope of this country. But what of this, if the fountain-head lets hour after hour, day after day, and week after week slip by, without doing what he ought to do.

Lord Erskine really spoke very well—rather too partial to the Americans (of which Lord Grenville steered clear,) and confined himself to the policy only, and the state of Europe, and commerce of our colonies, &c., and was very funny and comical in answer to Lord Eldon, about the measures of Lord Howick, on the 7th of January, 1807, which Lord Eldon had attacked.

When Wardle first began, I told you nothing could, or would come of it; but I have been mistaken, and he certainly has been allowed, by the King's Ministers, to hunt down the Duke of York. The dilemma is now most awkward, for the *principiis obsta* not having been acted upon, a whitewash now is very difficult, as the inflammation is great out-of-doors, and very many think they cannot bolster up the Duke. I really know not what to say or think, save that I agree with you most thoroughly, on the extreme weakness of the conduct of the Ministers, who, fairly speaking, are a wretched set. I hear the Royal Family at Windsor are wretched and unhappy, and the King is very angry; but whether he will do what he ought, *je n'en répondrai pas.*

Lord Glastonbury gave us his proxy yesterday, and Lord Melville spoke against the orders in council; but he would not vote with us, as he gave credit to Ministers that they would do what Lord Grenville recommended. Lord Wellesley did not speak, but they all seem anxious to keep all things in the hands

they are now in—I mean that family. Murmurs in the army and fleet are much talked of, "*il ne nous manque que cela.*"

The Grenville party seem to me to be playing their parts capitally at present. Best regards attend you and yours.

Dear Lord Buckingham,

Your faithful,

B.

P.S. Since I wrote my other letter, I fancy I was mistaken about Lord Melville, but I had been led into it from the hasty information of a noble Lord, who, I fancy, had not heard him as I did, not having been in the Commons when Lord Melville spoke. I hear to-day the King has no thoughts of any change, and that, *coute qui coute,* the Ministry have engaged to bolster up the Duke of York, and that they strongly impress on the King's mind, that the whole Opposition underhand support Mr. Wardle. Foolish and absurd as this is, I really believe such intrigues are going forward to keep these wretched actors on their theatre of places, &c.

I heard Lords Grenville, Bathurst, and Liverpool myself. I never mean to deceive you in my information, but I am often so myself, from committing to the pen too hastily my nonsense. I enjoy the polting Jemmy amazingly, as Bathurst takes such pains to solace him.

EARL TEMPLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Five o'Clock, Feb. 23, 1809.

I have just learnt that there is a letter from the Duke of York to the House, in the Speaker's hands, to be read, desiring an impeachment.

Half-past Five o'Clock.

The letter has just been read. It sets forth that the Duke has waited until the proceedings of the committee appointed to

inquire into his conduct had been closed. He expresses his regret that any "connexion should have existed," which has produced consequences so injurious to his character and honour. He pledges his "honour as a prince," that he had no corrupt participation in any of the transactions alleged at the bar to have taken place, that he was not privy to them, and that he knew nothing of their existence. He hopes the House will not proceed to take any step injurious to his character and honour, but if the House should think fit to commence any proceedings upon such evidence as has been adduced, he expresses his hope that he "shall not be condemned without a trial," and that he may enjoy the privilege of every British subject, of having the charges against him substantiated by the usual form adopted in courts of justice.

Such is the letter, not demanding impeachment, but deprecating condemnation without trial, tacitly acknowledging the connexion, allowing that it has had consequences injurious to his honour and character, and not resigning his offices. When it was read, Perceval merely moved that it should remain upon the table. It is evidently nothing but an attempt on the part of government to overawe the proceedings of the House, and as such, will have an effect prejudicial to the Duke.

As an illustration of Lord Temple's remarkable account of his interview with the Prince of Wales, the following statement cannot be read without interest.

"The Prince of Wales had, in a letter written to Adam, at the moment of the matter being first brought before the House, and which Adam showed me, stated that he considered an attack upon the Duke as an attack upon himself. It is true that, as the inquiry proceeded, and the Prince observed the very strong impression against the Duke, which the evidence had made on the public, he with-

drew his support from the Duke, and affected to remain in a state of neutrality. Still, however, there could be no doubt that he saw with great uneasiness the turn which the matter took, and that his neutrality arose only from an apprehension of drawing on himself some share of the popular odium, by seeming to espouse the cause of the Duke."*

EARL TEMPLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Sunday, Feb. 26.

When I got to Carleton House, Tyrwhit met me, and told me he was afraid the Prince was wavering in his determination to remain neuter, that Adam was trying to induce him to direct his friends to appear; that he, T, had been working all the morning to counteract this, and hoped that he had succeeded, but begged I would "use very strong language to him." Upon my entering the room, and inquiring after his health, he said he was well, but worried to death. He then made me sit down, and told me he wished to converse with me on the horrible scene that was passing. Upon my expressing my humble thanks for his condescension in permitting me to approach him at such a moment, and upon such a subject, and my earnest wish to learn what his opinions and feelings were, so far as he would allow me to hear them, he told me that I could easily guess what his feelings must be at seeing this attack made upon his family at the moment when he was mounting the throne; that his opinions were that his brother had brought all this upon himself, that he had behaved shabbily to the woman to whom he had promised an allowance which, small as it was, he had not paid; that a "gentleman's word was sacred, and that he could not talk of his honour as a prince, who could

* Diary, in Memoirs of Sir Samuel Romilly. Vol. II., p. 273.

not keep his promise as a gentleman;" that he had no wishes upon the subject, as he was determined not to interfere one way or the other. He had not been consulted either by the King, the Duke, or the Ministers; and therefore he would not meddle in the matter. He was no party to the Duke's irregularities; he never knew any of the women with whom his brother had been connected; he disliked such "society"—*chacun à son goût*—and he thought his taste was better than the Duke's; that his brother had not thanked him even for communicating to him through McMahon an anonymous letter, which he had received, as appeared afterwards, from Mrs. Clarke, warning him of what had since happened; that Ministers he detested, and would have nothing to say to them; and that from his father he had received no communication; that one of his sisters had written to pump him, and to her he had given no answer; and that the Duke of Cumberland had called upon him for the same purpose, to whom he had plainly said, that if the King wished to hear his sentiments, he would not communicate them to him through a third person.

He said he considered the letter sent to the House of Commons as a most ill-advised measure, that it was a breach of privilege, and could not fail of calling the attention of parliament; that he knew the circumstances attending the transaction; that the Cabinet had written a letter for the Duke, notifying to the House of Commons his resignation, but that the Duke had positively refused to sign it; that he had sent another form to the Cabinet, which they refused to agree to, and in their turn had sent a third, which was presented.

I hereupon ventured to express my joy that he had determined to adopt the line he had suggested to me, that the times were tremendous, and that, however harsh it might appear to his ears, as an honest man I must tell him, the opinion of the country was taken as to the Duke, and that its eyes were now turned upon him; that if he pursued the line he had mentioned, he would be carried to the throne upon the shoulders of his

people; whereas, if he joined in saving the Duke, provided his guilt appeared manifest, my firm opinion was, that he would have a struggle. In confirmation of this, I mentioned all I knew of the ferment raised in the country, the City of London, and in Westminster, and what was nightly the language in the debating societies.

Of all this he said he was aware, but he could not rise upon his brother's fall, that vigorous measures must be resorted to, for the purpose of keeping the people in order, and mentioned the old Sedition Bills. I told him he must pardon me, such measures could not, and must not be resorted to. The tranquillity of his people depended upon parliament doing its duty, and his forbearance. He said that was true, and, however bitter the pill, it must be swallowed, but that the debating clubs must be kept in order. The occasion of the whole of this cry, was Mrs. Clarke's becoming the instrument of the printers against whom prosecutions were pending on the Duke's behalf, and that Wardle, Folkestone, and Whitbread were at the bottom of the conspiracy. I said the real conspirators were the Ministers, who looking only to their own places, had to secure momentary popularity, thrown the ball loose, and could not catch it again, and had put up the son of their King into a pillory for everybody to pelt and insult.

He agreed with me, and said, that if Pitt or Fox had been alive, this would not have happened, and that if Lord Grenville had been Minister he would never have suffered it. I replied that if Lord Grenville had been Minister, or if Lord Grey had remained in the House of Commons, this would not have happened; that if the Duke had been guilty, his guilt would not have been screened, but that the peace of the country, and the security of his crown would not have been put into hazard.

To all this he assented. He said, however, it was hard that a man should be condemned without trial, and expressed his hope, that an impeachment would be the measure resorted to. I told

him it was my duty to tell him that I did not think that would be the case. I had not at all made up my mind upon the evidence, the whole of which I was not master of, but that I had no hesitation in saying that there was nothing which could implicate the Duke as participator, either directly or indirectly, in Mrs. Clarke's corruption; but that I was far from saying there would not be ground for the House to think some measure of censure necessary. He said then, that the Duke ought to have resigned, and have taken the chance of re-appointment in case of his innocence being proved.

He asked whether I thought there was any way of bringing the matter before the House of Peers. I told him certainly not—that Ministers had now put the thing out of their own control, that it must take its chance and its course, that the cup must be drunk, and that all that could be done was to take care that he, (the Prince,) should not be forced to drink the dregs, and that that would be best avoided by his stoutly persevering in the line he had laid down, to take no part. I concluded by telling him that this neither would nor should be a party business. He then put an end to the conversation by the warmest expressions of kindness to myself, by authorizing me to say, that he meant to keep an exact and a *bonâ fide* neutrality, but expressing his hope that it would be recollected that the attack was made upon the throne, and that an attack upon the throne was an attack upon the vital principles of the country. I finally concluded by remarking that the best defence of the throne, was the affections of the people, that the line he had laid down was the best calculated to secure both, for that, although the country could not and did not expect of their prince, that he should take part against his brother, they did expect that if by his imprudence his brother pulled his own house down, he should not involve himself and the best interests of his crown in the ruin. We parted with many expressions on his part of thanks, &c.

My conviction is, that his alarm is very great, that he thinks

extremely ill of the Duke's case, and is ready to give him up, if he could think that he would be supported in so doing, and that the fall of the Duke would not necessarily include a victory gained by the Republican party. To remove the latter part of his apprehension was the principal object of my share in the conversation.

The Duke of York's trial, as it was considered, appears to have excited some of the leading partizans in the House of Commons to fling accusations of corruption against each other. In more than one instance, public men of unquestionable honour were subjected to this ordeal.

MR. T. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Cleveland Square, March 7, 1809.

MY DEAREST BROTHER,

Everybody who comes into my room talks of the Duke of York, and of nothing but the Duke of York. I am just now assured that Wardle's motion will be an address to the King, to state the inquiry, and to describe the evidence as having proved the existence of scandalous corruption in the army, of which it is difficult to believe the Commander-in-chief to have had no knowledge or suspicion; but that in all events, circumstances enough have appeared to render it, in the judgment of the House, unfit that the Duke of York should continue to be Commander-in-chief. I confess that if I was well enough to attend, and was also satisfied that the Duke should not continue, I should nevertheless think it very questionable in point of prudence, to recommend a personal censure in a case so near to the succession of the crown; undoubtedly, the same object might be obtained by merely communicating the evidence to the throne, without incurring the very serious inconvenience which may arise from the other course; but, after all, I am persuaded

that the Ministers will be able to carry their measure of exculpation by numbers in the House, and the serious question will be, not what passes in the House, but what impression is made on the outside of the House, and all that I hear upon that subject is of a discouraging and alarming description. The cases of Lord Melville and Steel are again brought in discussion; the reformers are again in high force, and Egremont has just shown me a letter from Major Cartwright to him, inviting his assistance upon the ground that the monarchy and aristocracy of the country can only be supported by timely and sufficient reform. Lord Glastonbury just comes in to me to mend the story by a duel between Lord Paget and Sir Arthur Wellesley, in which Lord Paget has fallen; but the duel has, I presume, no more foundation than that of Sir Peter Teazle in the 'School for Scandal.' I am quite sick with gloomy political apprehensions, and that sickness is as unwholesome to the mind as the rheumatism can be to head or body.

EARL TEMPLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Camelford House, Thursday.

I write with the room full of our friends, to say that we have determined to vote against both Wardle's address, and Perceval's resolutions and address, and to move an address of our own, acquitting the Duke of corrupt practice or connivance at it; but expressing our hope, that his Majesty will take such steps as the necessity of the case, and his known regard for the interests of the country, will dictate. This we do, in consequence of proof having been adduced of the existence of great abuses, &c. We hope to carry this, as the House is certainly not satisfied with the manner in which Perceval's address leaves the question untouched. Perceval's speech was a most able one, and does him great credit.

The Prince sent me word, at five o'clock yesterday evening,

that the King had sent to him in great agony of mind, upon the subject of his neutrality, which he represented as condemnation, and had urged him to re-consider his determination, that the Queen had written to him to say the King's health and life depended upon the result, as well as the honour of the family; that in consequence of this, the Prince had determined to make no change in his determination, except to send down one of his household, viz., McMahon to vote for the Duke, to prove that he did not mean to condemn the Duke; but that all the other votes, Duke of Norfolk and Duke of Northumberland, &c., &c., were to remain as before. Such is the nature of the man! I cannot write more.

Most dutifully and affectionately yours.

There is no truth in A. Wellesley's having fought Paget. The former was in the House last night.

No one can accuse Mrs. Clarke of insincerity after the perusal of such an avowal as this:—

"I am of opinion that there is not a person in England at all acquainted with the proceedings of the House of Commons, with respect to the Duke of York, and my connexion with Wardle and his party, who is so credulous as to believe what Colonel Wardle has lately endeavoured to make the people of England credit as a divine revelation; namely, that I incurred the exposure of myself, children, and family together with abuse, anxiety of mind, and fatigue of person, during my examination in Parliament, from a pure patriotic zeal to serve the public. If there should be a person in the country that indulges such an opinion of my patriotism, he must be the most insane, or

the most weak man that ever lived. If I were to tell the same gross falsehoods which have issued from the immaculate Colonel Wardle, and compliment myself on having appeared against the Duke of York, without any motives of interest beyond the gratification of serving the public, I am sure the intelligent reader would consider me a most impudent hypocrite, and with great justice, for *if I had not been well satisfied of receiving the remuneration agreed upon*, not all the Jacobinical parties in Europe should have introduced my letters, and person to the notice of Parliament."*

Of the mischievous influence of her exhibition in Parliament, there cannot be two opinions, for it should be remembered that the revolutionary virus had been for several years, to some small extent, circulating in England by inoculation from France, and that there could scarcely occur a more stimulating cause for its diffusion, than the continuance of an excitement founded upon an exposure of facts tending to bring royalty into contempt. Fortunately, the consequences were not so grave as they threatened to be. The House of Commons could not be rendered vindictive, and after a while, became decidedly favourable to the accused.

* The Rival Princes; or, a faithful Narrative of Facts relating to Mrs. M. A. Clarke's Political acquaintance with Colonel Wardle, Major Dodd, &c., &c., &c., who were concerned in the Charges against the Duke of York; with a Variety of authentic and important Letters, and curious and interesting Anecdotes of several Persons of political notoriety. By Mary Anne Clarke. 1810.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Camelford House, March 16, 1809.

My dearest Brother,

With regard to myself, I have fortunately had no personal part whatever to take in this business; but do not bind me up (to use your own expression) with Bankes and his address.

I had consented to a very different form of address which was drawn up in this room by Lord Henry Petty, who undertook to move it. As soon as they all came down to the House of Commons, they altered their minds without any communication with me, and pledged themselves to vote for Bankes's address, which nothing should ever have induced me to vote for.

I do not blame them for following their own opinions, or disregarding mine, but only beg not to be considered as influencing or guiding conduct over which I have no more control than Perceval has over those who are considered as his supporters. I am very glad that neither Bankes's address, nor Wardle's are carried, and am convinced that the best course for the public was that which the thing has now taken, viz., that the House should go to an exculpatory vote on the corruption, after which the Duke will, I doubt not resign.

That his own mind is made up to this, I know, and could easily satisfy you, if it was right to name my authority in writing by the post.

The King's mind is, I believe, more difficult to satisfy. He holds out, as he has always done, just as long as he thinks his perseverance is likely to be of any use in carrying his point, and when he sees there is no longer any hope of that, he will give way as he has always done in such cases.

This conviction it cannot be very difficult now to bring to his mind; for all the 199 who voted for Bankes's address will, of course, vote for any other proper form for removing the Duke—

while the majority of 95 against that address included the Addingtons, and many of our friends who disliked the course of Bankes's address as much as that of Wardle's, and also several of the Government people, who will not vote for Perceval's address though they will for his two resolutions. If you put all these together at between twenty and thirty, and allow for a few stayers-away, that would leave only a majority of about as many more—a number certainly much too small to keep the Duke in his office against the voice of the country.

Whatever good, therefore, is gained to the country by putting Lord Harrington, or Lord Chatham at the head of the army, may be considered as achieved; and whatever mischief can arise from irretrievable disgrace brought upon the royal family, is also incurred. Few, I think, can be at a loss to strike the balance.

MR. W. H. FREMANTLE, M.P., TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Stanhope Street, March 24, 1809.

My dear Lord,

The change of the commander-in-chief, as far as it has yet gone, is limited to the person himself; all the staff remains, and I understand nothing is to be moved, or altered, either in the establishment or system. I suspect there is much more brewing by Lord Folkestone and others; they themselves are very close and silent upon it, but it transpires through other means. I had a long conversation yesterday with Lord Carhampton on the subject of the address, which was proposed at the Generals' club; notwithstanding Sir J. Pulteney's denial, the fact is undoubtedly true, resolutions were prepared by Sir D. Dundas, and Lord Moira took the chair (which was to have held the Duke of Cumberland on that day) in order to propose them. Their purport was not only to address the Duke of York in their own names as a body of general officers, but to recommend the same measure to the army in general. Lord Carhampton and Sir A. Clarke were the

only general officers who opposed the resolutions, which had been previously concerted, and the meeting attended by all the Duke of York's adherents. Sir J. Pulteney seconded the motion, although he has since most positively denied in the House of Commons the production of any paper at that meeting.

There is a very prevalent report about town of Taylor's dismissal at Windsor. I do not believe it, although I think there has been some strong opinions held by the King upon the subject of keeping back from him all the examinations taken before the House of Commons on the Duke of York's business.

Every part of the royal family at Windsor, excepting the King, is overwhelmed with despair at the Duke of York's business. The Queen very ill, and two of the Princesses dying. The King is said to bear it very firmly; but I have reason to believe he is indignant at his Ministers for having suffered it to come forward at all. The Duke of York, I am told by those who have seen much of him since, is quite sunk under it.

There is no news; the public know no more of the Cadiz news than what appears in the newspapers, and which does not confirm the admission of the British troops or shipping.

During this miserable business, which diverted public attention from events of much greater importance, Sir Arthur Wellesley came forward more prominently in the House of Commons; now moving a bill to allow volunteers from the Irish militia to enter regiments of the line; a day or two after, bringing forward another to permit the bishops and military commanders in Ireland to frank letters; then opposing a design of Mr. Whitbread's to make him surrender his office of Irish Secretary; afterwards joining with other general officers in the House, in bearing testimony to the discipline of the army, on behalf

of the Duke of York. But the pressing exigencies of the nation required him for duties of a higher character, and in April he was sent to command the British army in Portugal—the Marquis of Wellesley being soon afterwards sent to Spain, as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary.

This appointment was made at the instigation of Lord Castlereagh, not without reluctance on the part of his colleagues, in whom the influence of routine greatly predominated over merit, even so exalted as that of the new general; nor was it readily sanctioned by the highest authority, who would have preferred leaving such an enterprise to the claims of professional rank. In short, at Court, and in the Cabinet, it was regarded as an innovation, and was scarcely carried into effect when it was repented of.

The Grenvilles were also actively employed in their places in parliament during this Session, particularly Lord Grenville and Lord Temple, who brought forward several motions that were so many attacks upon the government, for alleged mismanagement and incompetency; but having at their command a large majority in both Houses, and the support of the Crown, the latter proceeded uninterruptedly with the business of the country. The breaking out of hostilities between Austria and France, in April, with some successes, such as the capture of Martinique in February, and the expedition to Italy, gave them confidence; nevertheless, Napoleon's brilliant successes at Eckmühl and Ebersberg, followed by the entry of the French into Vienna, must have had a contrary effect.

The advantages gained by Sir Arthur Wellesley in Portugal, while effecting the passage of the Douro against the army of Marshal Soult, on the 10th, 11th and 12th of May; and the successes of the Austrians at Aspern, on the 21st of the same month, again afforded them encouragement. They had also the satisfaction of bringing the inquiry respecting the Duke of York, to a conclusion, with no other consequences to his Royal Highness, than the discredit attending its disclosures. As will, however, presently be shown, all was not perfect harmony there, nor perfect success elsewhere.

MR. W. H. FREMANTLE, M.P.; TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Stanhope Street, June 5; 1809.

My dear Lord,

The general impression is most unfavourable to the measures now going on in Portugal, and no prospect of success is foreseen. I have heard that government have suspended the further embarkation of troops; at the same time, I know for certain, that a force of not less than 30,000 are preparing for some expedition, which is stated to be independent of that in Portugal.

Ministers are now perfectly happy, and exulting at having got through the Session. The state of Europe and of this country is quite a secondary consideration. Curwan's Bill and Martin's Resolutions will take much more debate, the latter particularly; but the end of this week, or the middle of next, I have no doubt, will nearly close the House of Commons.

Edward Paget remains with the army, and I fear Frederick Hervey does the same. They are both doing as well as possible.

There has been a grand piece of work, which is not yet

settled, in the Princess Charlotte's family. It is such nonsense, that nothing but its being made a general talk, and importance being given to it, renders it worth mentioning. But it is this: Princess Charlotte, some time ago, when the Duke of York's letters were much the subject of conversation, dined at her mother's, where she heard this subject discussed. On the next day, she desired to have a conference with the Prince of Wales—when she told him, that she thought it proper to apprise him, in case of her death, she had two or three years ago deposited her will in the hands of Mr. Nott (her sub-preceptor), and which she only thought it necessary to mention, in case there might ever be a question upon the publication of her letters or writing.

The Prince was rather surprised at this communication, but told her, she, in the first instance, had done a very foolish thing, but had acted very properly in now mentioning it to him, and that he should take steps upon it. Upon this, he spoke to the Bishop of Salisbury, who immediately summoned Nott, who acknowledged the fact, and that he was in possession of the will; but I hear he demurs at surrendering up the will—(whether this last circumstance is fact, I know not, but I believe it is). The will was made with Mr. Nott's knowledge two or three years ago, and one of its clauses is—That in case her grandfather should be reigning at the time of her decease, or her father, she earnestly implores either of them to give Nott a bishoprick.

One can hardly believe the man to have been so weak as to be privy to such a request; but that the fact of the will, and of this particular clause, is unquestionable, you may depend upon.

I suppose it will end in dismissing Nott. The King has been informed of it, but I have heard has left the subject in the hands of the Prince of Wales.

Sir D. Dundas has refused, most decidedly, the brevet-rank to young Hervey. Lord Grenville comes to town to-day, and

means to give his farewell speech to-morrow on the vote of credit.

Lord Erskine has had no communication from his son, and it is thought he has really had no grounds whatever to have justified or authorised him in executing such a treaty. The game is considered as completely up in Germany.

On the 1st of July, Lord Granville Leveson Gower, was appointed Secretary at War in the room of Sir James Pulteney, who resigned, and on the 11th and 15th Lords Harrowby, and Teignmouth, and Robert Dundas, were appointed Commissioners for the management of the affairs of India. This change, however, did not bring material strength to the Government, which was now exhibiting signs of weakness; as will appear at the commencement of the next note.

MR. T. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Dropmore, July 13, 1809.

My dearest Brother,

I write a line to tell you that I have this morning received a letter from town, from a correspondent of good authority, who writes to me in the following words:—

"There are dissentions in the Cabinet of a very serious nature; so much so, that my opinion is that resignations will be the result immediately, and that Lord Liverpool and Perceval are among those who will resign. The alleged cause of all this fracas is said to be Canning's enterprising spirit, who will have everything his own way."

This is curious, because I know that I can depend upon the authority on which it stands; and yet, I have certainly no faith at all in the actual event announced, because I do not think the Ministers have among them one single man of spirit and manli-

ness enough to resign his office, instead of submitting his conduct and opinion. Their squabbles will end in some new individual bargains; Canning squabbled with Castlereagh, and so got Lord Granville in to appease him. Perceval got Lord Harrowby in to counter-balance the offence he took at Lord Granville's being brought in; and some similar bargain will be the result upon the present occasion, as I believe, instead of the resignations announced in my correspondent's letter.

The only resignation which I believe in is, that of the Dean of Christ Church, and even that happens whimsically enough, for he has hitherto delayed his resignation, in order that Carey might be his successor; and I am told, that Lord Liverpool has succeeded in the preference being given to Hall.

I would meet you anywhere.

MR. T. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Cleveland Square, July 21, 1809.

DEAREST BROTHER,

French bulletins are come which state Bonaparte to have crossed the Danube; there have been battles on the 6th, 7th, and 8th, in which the French say they have totally defeated the Archduke, killed 10,000, and taken 20,000 prisoners and 40 pieces of cannon—so much I hear reported from the Secretary of State's office. It is further reported, that the Emperor had fled to Znaym with the remains of his army, so that Bonaparte has cut him off from Hungary, and this seems decisive and irrecoverable. I expected it, but I did not expect it to be so fatal.

What an inauspicious outset does this make to our expedition;* and how fearful a danger are we exposed to in draining the country of its last soldier under such circumstances. Lord Spencer, in a letter from Ryde, tells me that yesterday, Curtis

* To the Scheldt.

told him the orders for the sailing of the expedition were not yet come to Portsmouth. Lord Wellesley yesterday said he would sleep at Eton to-night, to see his boy in his way to Portsmouth.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Dropmore, July 27, 1809.

My dearest Brother,

The armistice you will have seen to-day, as well as I. But, perhaps, you do not know that it was feared the expedition could not be recalled, and that one division of it *is gone separately under Lord Huntley's command,* to attack Walcheren; the remainder being destined, if ever it does sail, to go under Lord Chatham to Boulogne!

Certainly if the Austrian peace prevents either or both these follies, we shall have ample reason to rejoice in it, however calamitous to Austria and Europe.

I need not tell you to keep this to yourself, till you hear it elsewhere. It will soon be but too public, by the infallible results of such madness, if ever it be attempted in such a form, at such a time, and under such leaders.

The Government was intent on another warlike demonstration, and it was organized at a time when Napoleon, with his customary good fortune and extraordinary military genius, was crushing the dying energies of Austria, with the great victory of Wagram. Sir William Napier, when relating the particulars of Sir Arthur Wellesley's first expedition to Portugal in July, 1808, states, that at this period only 9,000 men were ready for service at Cork, and that they had been collected by "the Grey and Grenville administration, so remarkable for unfortunate military

enterprises, with a view to permanent conquests in South America.*" There is more than one mistake here; the Grenville administration resigned in March 1807, one year and four months before the period indicated. One or two of the expeditions designed by that government, failed it is true, but through no fault of the Grenvilles; and these enterprises exhibited nothing "so remarkable" as the arrangements for the first expedition to Portugal, which produced the convention of Cintra—those for the second demonstration in the Baltic—those for the expedition to Spain which caused the disastrous retreat to Corunna —the unprofitable demonstration in Italy—and the most *remarkable* of all their achievements in this way, the expedition to Walcheren—all accomplished in one short year.

Nor is there any proof that the Grenville ministry intended permanent conquest in South America. The expedition to Mexico, was wisely abandoned, when it was found that preparations for it could not be completed by the time proper for commencing hostilities; and for the Buenos Ayres and Monte Video business, they were in no way responsible. There is reason to believe that they contemplated an attack much nearer home—most certainly it would not have been at Walcheren; and whatever its object, its directors would not have sent six general officers to supersede each other, at the opening of the campaign, as in the case of Wellesley, Dalrymple, Burrard, Baird, Crawford, and Moore.

Bad, however, as this was, it was thrown into the shade by an expedition designed and carried out this summer. It

* History of the War in the Peninsula. Vol. I., p. 113.

is not necessary to enter here into details of this failure, and the references to it in the correspondence will be found to require very little elucidation. It is sufficient to state, that while a general possessed of the highest military genius was left in Portugal, imploring in vain for the means of accomplishing the great objects he had in view, a naval and military force, of no less than eighty thousand men sailed from port. "So vast an expedition," we are told by a competent authority, "had never before left the British shores, neither any one so meanly conceived, so improvidently arranged, so calamitously conducted.*"

The domestic character of George III, was truly admirable; the reputed vices of a Court were unknown to him, and if he did not display dazzling qualities as a sovereign, as a father, and a husband, he was always most exemplary. This peculiar homeliness of nature must have rendered him more sensitive of those offences against propriety, which certain members of the Royal family were accused of continually exhibiting. The Princess of Wales had more than once caused his Majesty considerable anxiety, but the kindliness of his nature was never more conspicuous than in his conduct towards Her Royal Highness. His interposition in her behalf was again demanded. Fortunately, there was no occasion for another "delicate inquiry." Her Royal Highness was accused of having incurred debts that she could not pay, which had been under the attention of Government for at least twelve months.

* Napier's "Peninsular War." Vol. II. p. 145.

The following abstract of the correspondence that passed on this subject, was made by Mr. Adam, of the establishment of the Prince of Wales, and presented by him to Lord Grenville.

14th *August*, 1808.—Letter from Duke of Portland to the Prince of Wales, stating that application has been made to the King's confidential servants, by Messrs. Blagrave and Walter, solicitors for tradesmen employed by H.R.H. the Princess of Wales, for liquidation of their demands. The King's confidential servants think it their duty to take no step without endeavouring to obtain the advantage of the Prince's sentiments in regard to it, &c. (Signed) PORTLAND.

Mr. Adam to the Duke of Portland.

14th *August*, 1808.—H.R.H. the Prince having nothing to communicate to parties interested, declines to interfere "in any consideration which his Majesty's Ministers may think it their duty to give to the subject."

In October and December, 1808, Mr. Perceval had conversation and correspondence with Mr. Adam on this subject, and professed great anxiety to prevent the matter coming into public discussion in parliament.

In April, 1809, (pending the proceedings respecting the Duke of York) Mr. Perceval renewed these conversations; and on 25th May, Mr. Perceval had a full discussion with Mr. Adam upon it.

Mr. Perceval's view of the matter was, that Sir W. Dolben had withdrawn his proposed motion for £5000 per annum to the Princess of Wales, when the Prince got back his income in Addington's administration, on Sheridan's undertaking in the House of Commons, that the Prince would allow that additional sum to the Princess; that this sum being now due for eight

years, the creditors of the Princess were entitled to it, and that this sum would cover the Princess's debts, which were about £41,000.

Mr. Adam contended that Sir W. Dolben's principle had been, that the Princess should have a tenth part of the Prince's income; that if it were investigated, she would appear to have had a fifth, having £12,000 per annum, when the Prince's income was reduced to £60,000; and when the Prince got his full income, the Princess would then have the tenth. That the Prince, even if so inclined, could not, without great difficulty, liquidate so large a debt; and Mr. Adam, therefore, suggested an aid from government, by instalments. Mr. Perceval objected, that there was no fund but the Droits of Admiralty to supply this, and that the account would thus be brought into discussion in parliament. Mr. Adam then suggested the Fund of Secret Service of £10,000 per annum. Mr. Perceval objected, that this fund was exhausted at this time, in pursuing the proceedings respecting the Princess.

On 27th April, 1809, Mr. Adam, by order of the Prince, delivered a statement to the Lord Chancellor, and to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, to show that an allowance of £12,000 per annum was settled on the Princess, but was not punctually paid from Midsummer, 1800; that at Michaelmas, 1802, the payments of that sum were completed, and ever since, £3000 has been paid quarterly by the Prince to the Princess's Vice-Chamberlain. That in October and November, 1805, and in 1806, there was paid to the Princess from the Droits of Admiralty, and as the price of the house in Greenwich Park, now the Naval Asylum, £34,000, beyond the sum of £5000 a year, which had been settled by parliament for the personal expenses of the Princess, and was annually issued to her from the Exchequer; that since all these payments to the Princess, she has incurred a further debt of £27,500 in the household, and £13,500 for personal expenses, making a debt of £41,000,

and upwards; which, when added to the £34,000 above mentioned, makes a total debt incurred by the Princess, since her separation, of £75,000, over and above the £12,000 per annum, paid her by the Prince, and the £5000 per annum paid from the Exchequer. That on 24th March, 1803, the Prince was, by act of parliament, put into possession of his full income, to take effect from the 5th January, 1803, being six years from January last, to which date the foregoing debt is made up.

That if the supposed sum of £5000, alluded to by Sir W. Dolben, was allowed by the Prince, the utmost the Princess could be entitled to, was £30,000, being less, by £45,000, than the debt which she has incurred. That if the Prince deducted the property-tax, which he pays, the above £30,000 would be reduced to £25,325. That the debt now due by the Princess, has been incurred in three years, which makes her annual expenditure exceeding £12,000, beyond even the supposed addition of £5000 per annum.

But that if the Prince obtains a sufficient indemnity in future, from any liability to the debts of the Princess, he will satisfy the demands of the creditors as stated above; and will, in future, allow the Princess an annual addition of £5000.

Various projects appear to have been entertained in the view of this indemnity. May 3rd, 1809, it was proposed that the King in Council should declare the Prince released from all further demands, &c. Then again a motion of an act of parliament to the same effect.

In the meantime, the opinion of the law officers of the Prince of Wales was taken as to the Prince being now liable to the debts of the Princess, and as to the means of securing him in future, if he is now liable.

Their opinion 26th May, 1809, was, that if the creditors of the Princess pursue the course prescribed by 35 George III, cap. 129, the revenue of the Prince is liable, and can only be secured against remaining so, by a new act of parliament.

30th May, 1809.—Mr. Perceval to Mr. Adam—states that he is sorry to find the debts of the Princess exceed the sum of £41,000 by about £8000, and suggests that the King's servants may advise the King to issue this £8000 to the Princess from the Droits of Admiralty.

3rd June, 1809.—Mr. Adam to Mr. Perceval—is ordered by the Prince to remind Mr. Perceval of the objections Mr. Perceval had made in a former instance of the inconvenience of bringing this before parliament by any payments from a fund which might be made matter of debate in the House of Commons. The Prince will take upon himself the further payment of this £8000, if he has a sufficient indemnity against being liable to future debts of the Princess.

7th June, 1809.—Mr. Perceval to Mr. Adam—is sorry to find the debts of the Princess amount to £51,056, instead of £49,000.

7th June, 1809.—Mr. Adam to Mr. Perceval—the Prince thinks "this additional demand must be supplied by the Princess from her own restricted expenditure."

At length in June, 1809, a proposal is formally signed by the Prince and by the Princess, in which the substance of the above papers is recited. The Princess undertakes to direct the officer receiving her income to settle her payments according to the instructions for the regulations of the Prince's income by the cap. 35th Geo. III. The Prince undertakes to discharge by quarterly payments the debts of the Princess, amounting to £49,000, and to allow the Princess £17,000 per annum. And it is understood that, if after this, any demand be made on the Prince's revenue by any creditor of the Princess in future, immediate application shall be made to parliament for an act to indemnify the Prince against the debts of the Princess. This is signed by the Prince and Princess.

GEORGE P.
CAROLINE P.

And further, another paper is signed by the King's sign-manual, signifying his knowledge and approbation of this transaction, and this paper is countersigned by the Lord Chancellor, Lord President, First Lord of Treasury, and Chancellor of the Exchequer.

ELDON, GEORGE P.
CAMDEN, CAROLINE P.
PORTLAND, „
SP. PERCEVAL.

The accounts that reached the public of the progress of the Walcheren expedition, produced great excitement, but no one regarded the news with more gloom than the King. A severe and sudden attack of indisposition, which visited the Duke of Portland at this period, added to his Majesty's uneasiness, which the dangerous state of his favourite daughter, the Princess Amelia, increased to a state of despondency that was but little ameliorated, even by the gratifying intelligence of the victory of Talavera, which earned for Sir Arthur Wellesley the title of Lord Wellington.

MR. W. H. FREMANTLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Englefield Green, Aug. 13, 1809.

MY DEAR LORD,

Probably the papers will have informed you, that the Duke of Portland is dangerously ill. I write the instant I learn the real fact, to tell it you. He was seized with a paralytic stroke on Friday last in coming from town to Bulstrode, after attending a Council, and was taken out of his carriage speechless and insensible at Bulstrode. He was better yesterday, had recovered his speech and mind, but of course without any possible

hopes of perfect recovery; quite incapable of business, and with the bare hopes of his lingering on. Expresses had been immediately sent to Lord Titchfield and Lord W. Bentinck, and Lady Bath. The King was informed of his severe illness, but to him it was called a fainting fit. Nothing can equal the gloom it has created at Windsor, and adding this difficulty to the sensations created by the complete failure of the expedition, it has, I believe, at last made the King feel that something must immediately be done to satisfy the public mind, and to secure himself. What that will be, I will not pretend to say, but I fully believe he will endeavour to support this wretched and desperate government, by offering the Treasury to Lord Harrowby or Bathurst. That either of these men will be mad enough to accept it under the present circumstances, I cannot possible believe. The present temper of the King is gloomy to a degree, and I know him to be in a state of the greatest distress of mind, but not irritable in the slightest manner. I should hope, for the sake of the country, it was alarm, and that such alarm would lead him to see the incompetency and the wickedness of his present Ministers.

All the private accounts from Walcheren speak of the ultimate object of destroying the shipping, as quite hopeless. On the 8th, upwards of two hundred of the shipping had gone up beyond Antwerp, at which place they had collected 30,000 men, and more arriving every hour. Booms were also placed across the river to prevent an attack from our small craft; and batteries without end. There is not now the least idea that Lord Chatham will attempt it, but be satisfied with his laurels in the capture of Flushing, which of course must fall. I hope to God he may, for in that case, at least, we shall save our brave troops for a more important contest, which must soon take place on our own shores. Much blame is imputed to Lord Chatham for not sending on immediately to attack the shipping, while he was investing Flushing; but I really believe from what I hear, that it was quite impracticable. The total want of arrangement, of

information, of common precaution on the part of our Ministers, in the whole of this most extravagant and boasted expedition, is not to be credited, and would have rendered the abilities of the ablest general in Europe, or that ever did exist in Europe, abortive.

The moment I hear anything more respecting the Duke of Portland you shall immediately know. I only got this information late last night.

Ever, my dear Lord,
With most sincere attachment and affection,
Your most devoted and faithful servant,
W. H. F.

Princess Amelia is going to Weymouth, from whence I should think it unlikely she will return.

Englefield Green, Aug. 16, 1809.

My dear Lord,

I have had so little worth mentioning to you, that I have not troubled you with a letter since I left town. I understand the King is in a prodigious degree of fidget respecting the expedition, and can hardly forbear to express his alarm. If he did so, it would only be in unison with everybody whom I hear speak upon the subject; the delay in its departure, and the chief who commands it, are matters sufficient to create the greatest apprehension. I suppose you know that Popham wrote from on board the 'Venerable' at Deal, after Lord Chatham had embarked, "that nothing could be expected from a man, so perfectly ignorant of his profession, and so incapable of acting." This he wrote to his friend Davison in Newgate, who has shown the letter. Whatever was meant as a *coup-de-main* has evidently failed, and it can hardly be imagined that the French will not have collected (even if they had not before done it,) a body of troops since the 28th of last month, equal to those British

they will have to contend against at Antwerp; the very remnant of the garrisons in the neighbouring towns will give them a force equal for such an object.

I heard in an indirect manner, that the Prince means to pay you a visit this summer. I don't know if it is true, (and if it should, probably, you may have had it announced,) but I think it right to give you this hint; he most likely means to go to Lord Hertford's, and will probably make the same tour he did last year. At present, he is gone to Brighton for his birthday, where he will remain till after the Duke of York's, the 16th, and I suppose, will not make his visits till late in the year. I do not at all mention this as a positive knowledge of my own, but I suspect it from the person whom I heard mention it. The King is delighted with Lord Harrowby taking office, but shuns all business, and all concern in politics, as much as he possibly can. If anything occurs worth mentioning to you, you shall immediately hear from me. I had a letter from J. Fremantle.

MR. W. H. FREMANTLE, M.P., TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Englefield Green, Aug. 17, 1809.

MY DEAR LORD,

Since I wrote to you, I understand the Duke of Portland has been roused, and has regained sufficient strength to be carried out in his carriage; but he never can be capable of business again, however they may think it advisable to keep him in office. He will probably be got to town, and you may see in the papers, that he transacts business, but he has had such a blow, that he can never again rally to a recovery. The King, notwithstanding the victory of Sir A. Wellesley, is in a state of great despondency and gloom, and you may be assured he sees the difficulties increasing every hour, and the prospect of a change, or an alteration of his present Ministry, absolutely necessary. The language of all the people about him is desponding to a degree. The Duke of York has

been very ill with an attack of spasms on his chest, and for some little time in danger. He is now better. Princess Amelia goes to Weymouth on the 29th, accompanied by her sister, Princess Mary.

The event of the battle of Talavera was most uncertain for a considerable time; at one moment the French had nearly penetrated our centre, which was relieved by the 48th and cavalry. The individual acts of bravery were unbounded: General Hill, at one moment pulled from his horse by French grenadiers, and shot through his coat at the same moment, but rescued by his own men—this at night in the dark. In the company in which John Fremantle is serving with the Coldstreams, his captain and lieutenant both wounded and carried off the field, and the company left to his charge; and of eighty-eight men of which it consisted, thirty-six killed or wounded.

I have seen several letters from the army, one of which says; "If we remain here, we must starve or die of pestilential vapour, arising from the dead bodies, but we cannot advance for want of provisions, and God knows how we are to retreat—at present, however, nothing is decided upon." It is a most lamentable reflection, to think that such a battle has been fought and won, and so little probability of deriving benefit from it. From the great pains which have been taken to keep the Duke of Portland's attack from the public knowledge, I have no doubt it is intended to keep him in till the last moment; but I still think Lord Harrowby will be the man to succeed him. You may be assured again for a fact, that all is despair and gloom at Windsor to the greatest degree, and the King's mind is not yet made up to any alteration at all.

Believe me ever,

With most true and unfeigned regard,

Your most affectionate and grateful humble servant,

W. H. F.

EARL TEMPLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Dover, Aug. 15, 1809.

My dear Father,

I have seen part of a letter from Charles Stewart* to Cooke. Nothing could be more tremendous than the attack of the French. At one moment, they had all but penetrated our centre, and nothing but a movement of the 48th regiment saved the battle. How high, and deservedly high will this place Wellesley. I fear, however, this victory, splendid as it is, comes too late to do any permanent good. It is plain that the Spaniards will not move, and we have not the means of reinforcing Wellesley. If half the troops which are now knocking their heads against Flushing were available, an important blow might still be struck in Spain. From the former, all our accounts here are desponding. No hopes seem to be entertained of getting the ships. It should appear from some letters I have seen of the 8th, that it was Lord Chatham's determination, at all hazards, to push up the Scheldt. If so, he will be most fortunate if he can re-embark.

Wellesley's victory will, I think, decide the question whether the present Ministers go on or strike. Without it, I do not think either Ponsonby or Bathurst would have had nerves to have carried on the government. With it, they will take advantage of the task, and go on as long as it suits them. What is the talk of the county upon the Duke of Portland's death? Will Lovett or Cavendish start? As the Extraordinary Gazette has not reached us, we have no names of the wounded in the Battle of Talavera. Amongst those of the killed, I thank God I see none I am interested about. It will be almost too much, I fear, to expect similar good fortune when the list of the wounded is published.

Ever dutifully and affectionately yours.

* The late Marquis of Londonderry.

The charge of rashness brought against Lord Wellington in the following note, will surprise the reader; probably Lord Grenville considered him rash in comparison with the unenterprising spirit of some other English commanders. His caution was proverbial, when the display of such a quality was imperative; and when an opportunity presented itself for securing a brilliant advantage, he was about the last general likely to be held back by anticipations of a charge of precipitancy.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Boconnoc, Sept. 3, 1809.

Many thanks to you, my dearest brother, for the communication of your son's interesting letter. We have since heard that the expedition is finally abandoned, and that that great hero, Lord Chatham is daily expected in England. This is, in my judgment, the best news we have for a long time heard; for what could be more terrifying than the notion of an English army of 30,000 or 40,000 men going into action against equal numbers, under such a commander? Nothing short of a miracle could have saved them from destruction.

I now suppose these troops will be sent to Spain; but, I trust, not under Lord Chatham. Not that I think our friend Sir Arthur has given this year any very favourable specimen of his talents, except in the field, and in the actual day of battle. For if we were to admit the truth of his boast of having beat double his force, the next question must be, how came you into a situation where you could be attacked by twice your numbers? Still Wellesley is a soldier, and a man (though very rash) yet of considerable talents. What the other is, we both know.

Of the end of the Spanish business, my opinion remains what

it has been from the beginning. If Austria continues the contest, it may occupy Bonaparte some months longer; but the force is too unequally balanced to give any prospect of success. This campaign has afforded to Spain all that could be hoped for in the way of diversion. How has it been employed? The Spaniards have hardly maintained the ground they had before. Our small army (great in proportion to our means, but small indeed in proportion to that object) has twice advanced and twice been obliged, with immense loss, to resume the defensive; and the main body of our force which certainly might have driven the French out of Spain, or have raised the whole north of Germany in arms, has taken a fishing town, and has not destroyed a dozen ships of war.

I cannot pretend to regret that this army did not go to Westphalia or to Spain, because I am very sure that, whatever the temporary success might have been in either country, the final event would have been the loss of both the country and the army. The countries are now lost, and the expense incurred; but, thank God! the army is saved. May it return equally uninjured from Spain, if it be doomed to go there now! For there is every reason to think we shall want it all.

From what I hear of the Duke of Portland, he cannot recover this last attack; though it may not be quite immediate, the event is, I believe, certain, and not remote. This would make me very uneasy, if I had the least reason to fear being sent for; but this is, I am satisfied, quite out of the question. I was not sanguine in 1806, yet what a change since that time! and what hope could there be of success with the Court against us, and with the parliament and country in such a state. I do not think Lord Harrowby has nerves and health for the situation, and am therefore convinced that it will end in Lord Bathurst.

EARL TEMPLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Dover, Sept. 3, 1809.

My dear Father,

My last told you of the arrival of the transports. I went over to Deal yesterday. Everything we have yet experienced of disgrace, everything we have yet conceived of contemptible or of ludicrous, must sink before this proof of the vigour of our Ministers, and of the military talents of their general. The Duke of York may well triumph, for compared with this, the Dutch Convention was a victory; Sir James Pulteney ought to rejoice, for now Ferrol must stand high in the list of our achievements. I never in my life heard such violent and undisguised language as that held by every individual in both services. I have seen and conversed with many officers of all descriptions, and of all the tone was the same. The navy are, I think, the most violent. Direct imputations are cast upon Lord Chatham's courage, as well as his generalship; in short, I do not see how it will be possible for government to avoid a court-martial. The dissentions amongst the generals are very great. Coote was sent back by Lord Chatham to command in Flushing, and is indignant; Grosvenor and Lord Paget have both left their divisions, and arrived with the transports. Everything my former informant had told me, is fully confirmed.

An officer upon the staff, said he should not have known of the existence of a commander-in-chief, had he not seen in his garden at Batz, two turtles sprawling upon their backs; he was never visible until two o'clock, and in the luxury of a London kitchen, was he living within twelve miles of the enemy, whilst his army were living upon salt meat and biscuit, without tents or covering of any sort, and in water. The sick list of the army, when these people came away, amounted to 5000. I fear, however, we have not yet heard the worst. The cavalry left

Walcheren on Wednesday. An officer is arrived, who left it on Thursday with despatches. He knows nothing except that he was ordered in the middle of the night to set off, that a very heavy firing had been heard, *as he says*, both of cannon and of musketry, from Beveland, that the firing continued when he left the Scheldt, and that just as he sailed, four ships of the line had their signals made to proceed up the river. The rumour in Flushing was, that "the French were following us up."

Admiral Campbell (at Deal) told me he had particularly examined him as to whether the firing might not have been an engagement between our flotilla, covering our retreat, and that of the enemy. He said the impression in Flushing was that it was not. You recollect that the Scheldt is fordable opposite Batz, that the French force was collected upon that point, and that the cavalry transports going down the Scheldt, met the empty transports going up the Batz to bring away the Guards, and the other troops in Beveland. All this makes one very fidgetty.

I understand it is impossible to hold Walcheren for any time, that even every drop of water must be sent from hence, and, in fact, some victuallers actually sailed yesterday from the Downs with water on board, to water our troops upon their retreat. The cavalry have not lost many horses, but having never been landed, the horses are very sickly and unserviceable. I take for granted we shall meet in November, and a pretty day of reckoning that meeting will be for Ministers; but will that make up to us for the loss of military character we have sustained? The stories and pasquinades brought home by the army are amusing, and shew the tone and temper of the service.

Moret is described as having told Lord Chatham, upon the surrender of Flushing, that his Lordship's batteries were very fine when they did open, but that they were so long in opening, the French believed he was waiting to white-wash them,

as well as finish them! Adieu, my dear father. Let me hear how your health goes on.

Yours dutifully and affectionately,

The conduct of the Spanish Junta, who assumed the direction of the patriotic government, embarrassed the commander of the English army to a greater extent than the movements of the French generals. Though appointed by them, after the battle of Talavera, Captain-General of Spain, he was continually left without supplies. His complaints of their inattention, carelessness and ignorance were incessant; and the Marquis Wellesley, August 21, 1809, in his correspondence with Don Martin de Garay, one of their most influential members, did all he could to awaken them to a more lively sense of their duty to themselves and their allies, by repeating Sir Arthur's threat of withdrawing into Portugal.*

Most of the Spanish generals were as incapable as the Supreme Central Junta, and in more than one instance, their over confidence in themselves, and jealousy of the English general, produced irreparable mischief. The Spanish troops, too, were often found worse than useless. At Talavera, entire corps threw away the arms and clothing with which they had been furnished by England, and in their flight plundered the baggage of their allies, then

* "Sir Arthur Wellesley solemnly assures me, that since the 22nd of July, the horses of the cavalry and of the artillery have not received three regular deliveries of barley, and the infantry have not received ten days' bread. Under these circumstances, Sir Arthur Wellesley states that the British army cannot remain in Spain."

engaged with the enemy, fighting for the independence of Spain.

The state of things described by Admiral Berkeley, who held the naval command of the station in 1809, differs but little from a similar picture given to the public a short time since. Lord Wellington had difficulties enough before him, in an enemy possessed of infinitely superior resources, but these affected his army less than the difficulties he had behind him, in inadequate supplies. As for the Spanish generals, they were worse than useless; vanity and incapacity continually inspiring them to risk the existence of their divisions, and the safety of their allies.

ADMIRAL BERKELEY TO EARL TEMPLE.

Lisbon, Sept. 10, 1809.

My dear Lord,

I really believe there never was so infamous a proceeding as Cuesta's towards Sir A. Wellesley, as owing to either his incapacity, age, or treachery, the campaign has terminated more as if we had sustained a defeat, than gained a victory; and our commissaries are equally to blame, as really, in every part of that department, such ignorance and delay appears, that it makes my heart ache. I have, however, (in all which relates to their transactions with me,) made formal complaints, and I hope it will show how very wrong a principle that department has been acting upon. Twice has the army been stopped for money, and twice for provisions. The horses starved, while ships loaded with hay and oats from England enough to furnish all the cavalry, were rotting and spoiling in the Tagus. The medical staff is as bad—

as our army were dying away for want of medicines, while more than sufficient were in ships in the river. The medical staff as well as the commissariat, instead of being with the army, are in Lisbon, keeping their houses, horses, and w——'s, and the Commissary-General at Cintra, taking his diversion.

You will, I dare say, be surprised at the retreat of the British into Portugal, especially if you have seen Lord Holland, who is so enamoured with the Spaniards, that he will not allow them any blame. But when you know the real state, you will see it, perhaps, in another light. Previous to the battle of Talavera, Cuesta might have annihilated Victor's army, on the 23rd, but delayed until next day, by which he gave them time to retreat.

After the battle of Talavera, when Soult's corps had by forced marches come into our rear, but too late to co-operate with Victor, who was beaten, Sir Arthur desired Cuesta to keep the position at Talavera, which he was certain Victor would not attempt again, while the English army marched upon Soult. This Cuesta agreed to, but scarcely had Sir Arthur begun his march on the 3rd, when Cuesta decamped, and left our hospitals, &c., to the mercy of the enemy, who did not even then come into Talavera until the 11th or 12th. Sir Arthur, thus finding his rear unprotected, and that Cuesta had taken his position on the Tagus, fell back and crossed it, and remonstrated upon this piece of treachery with such effect, that the Junta recalled Cuesta, but not until he had suffered himself to be surprised, and put to flight at the bridge of Arzobispo, by about five hundred French cavalry, who forded the Tagus above him. Sir Arthur, therefore, has taken his position on the frontiers of Portugal, with his head-quarters at Badajoz, Spanish army at Truxillo, and Portuguese army at Castel Branco; and the enemy have likewise retired to their old positions—Soult having retired when he heard of Sir Arthur's advance upon him to Salamanca, and Joseph to Madrid.

It is said that Bonaparte has sent for 30,000 men—if so, Joseph must retreat from Spain; as, by the time Wellesley's army is restored a little, and some arrangement (which is now going on) made, to co-operate better, the French will not be able to make a stand, if the war in Austria prevents Bonaparte from reinforcing them. Victor now acknowledges having lost 14,000 men at Talavera. Our loss in horses, by famine, has been very great; the 14th Light division quite dismounted; and no means, either in Spain or here of remounting. I have saved the army's starving, by sending for bullocks from Barbary, and by the same channel have supplied three hundred mules; a responsibility I was obliged to take on myself, as, notwithstanding I urged the Commissary General upon the point, I could not get him to stir. But Sir Arthur Wellesley has thanked me for my interference and approval of the measure.

George is just arrived express from the army, which is a piece of kindness in Sir Arthur, as, certainly, although he did not ask it, it is not an unpleasant thing to see his family. We received a letter from poor Lord Braybrooke, thanking us for civility to his son, little knowing his fate.

Your very sincere friend,
And affectionate uncle,
G. B.

The Walcheren disasters were daily increasing in magnitude under the observation of public opinion, which now began to assume a somewhat formidable expression towards every one considered to be responsible for them. It is, however, indisputable that had Lord Castlereagh's secret instructions to Lord Chatham been carried out, the result of the enterprise might have been very

different.* In the following letter, the coming storm is clearly indicated.

"MR. W. H. FREMANTLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

"Englefield Green, Sept. 12, 1809.

MY DEAR LORD,

I am very glad to hear you are better, and continue to find so much benefit from the warm bath. I condole with you on the loss of poor Henry Neville, whom every body unites in speaking well of.

I had a letter this morning from J. Fremantle, dated the 25th August, in which he says, "poor Neville was very ill, and much reduced by a violent dysentery, before the battle of Talavera, but he could not be persuaded to take care of himself, and after it, he continued taking his share of his outpost duty. Fever came on him at Truxillo, and on his way to Elvas, where all the sick were ordered, he died at Santa Cruz, on the 21st, the first day's journey from Truxillo, at nine o'clock in the morning; and if it had not been for our brigade passing this, nobody would have known who he was, or anything about him. Most of the officers of the brigade of Guards attended his burial that night."

His letter is full of nothing but the gross and infamous conduct of the Spanish troops. He gives an account of the distress for provisions—being frequently under the necessity of sending fourteen miles for bread; and a bit, the size of a three-penny loaf, costing three or four shillings. He says 2500 British prisoners were left at Talavera; and adds, that on the morrow

* Alison's "History of Europe," Vol. VIII., p 192. Note.

they were to march, and would reach Elvas on the 30th, and the army then to be stationed between that place and Alcantara, the Guards at Campo Mayor.

I had also a most friendly letter from Arthur Wellesley, telling me he had appointed him his aide-de-camp; but as he is now acting as adjutant, he does not mean to remove him to an idle scene at head-quarters; but he is on his staff on pay, and should the army again advance, of course he will employ him.

I understand the quarrel has risen to the highest pitch between Lord Chatham and Castlereagh, and that the former vows vengeance for the cruelty of throwing the whole blame of the failure of the expedition on him. It is quite impossible he can sit quietly by and see all the government papers full of abuse of him, and the defence of the Ministers built on his misconduct. The Duke of Kent called upon me a day or two ago, and told me positively, that a change was immediately going to take place, and that Lord Castlereagh was going out—but I don't believe a word of it. Of course, the dreadful failure, and the lamentable state of the troops, and the general indignation of the public, must create much uneasiness and dispute in the Cabinet, but they are all so personally interested in the possession of their respective offices, that none will quit who can help it. There is no doubt that Lord Bathurst is silly enough, and I should say bold enough to agree to stand in the Duke of Portland's shoes when he goes, which must be shortly. Thank God, Frederick Hervey, who is in the 20th, is come back safe to Deal. If anything occurs, that I hear of, you shall certainly know it immediately. The Prince goes from Lord Hertford's to Lady Downshire.

Ever with most unfeigned attachment,
Your most faithful and affectionate humble servant,
W. H. Fremantle.

LINES DROPPED ON BOARD THE 'VENERABLE,' PREVIOUSLY TO THE SAILING OF THE EXPEDITION AGAINST FLUSHING, 1809.

"Alas, poor Chatham! whither wouldst thou run,
Thyself undoing for a set undone!
Should Fortune leave thee—and we know she can
Desert the bravest and the purest man—
Else why was Pompey by her smiles betray'd,
Or Cato driven on his trusty blade?
The very man who now with shouts pursue,
Should Fortune leave thee, will desert thee, too."
Thus Reason spoke; but Folly, onward rushing,
Cried, "Chatham, go!" and Chatham went to Flushing.

Among the pleasantries circulated at the expense of the tardy commanders was,

"Great Chatham's son, with his sword drawn,
Was waiting for Sir Richard Strachan;
And Strachan, as eager to get at 'em,
Was waiting for the Earl of Chatham."

Another characteristic of the general, is pointed at in the following dialogue.

FRIEND. When sent fresh wreaths on Flushing's shores to reap,
What didst thou do, illustrious Chatham?
CHATHAM. Sleep!
FRIEND. To men fatigued with war repose is sweet,
But when awake, didst thou do nothing?
CHATHAM. Eat!

The government had so completely got out of order, that no one seemed surprised when the machinery stopped. The

termination of its functions directed public attention to its defects, which was followed by a searching examination into their cause. The following circumstances were elicited. The Cabinet for some time had been directed by Mr. Canning; not only the nominal head, the aged and infirm Duke of Portland, submitting to his influence, but nearly all his colleagues appear to have been equally subservient. They seem to have been rendered sensible of their weakness as a government, and were readily persuaded into the conviction that this defect might be traced to one of their number, and could be remedied by his removal, to make room for a statesman of recognised ability, who was willing to be accepted in his place. The able statesman named as his successor was the Marquis Wellesley, who in addition to a reputation for administrative talent, which recommended him to the government, enjoyed the confidence of Mr. Canning, his zealous proposer, advocate, and friend.

Keeping their impressions and intentions carefully concealed from Lord Castlereagh, the other members of the Ministry came to a determination to enforce his dismissal by a certain period.* It should be borne in mind that while this arrangement was being carried out, and this Minister, instead of earnest coadjutors, was surrounded by opponents, the most important naval and military demonstration against the powerful enemy of England that the British government had ever contemplated, was in preparation; and the responsibility of its organisation and direction was thrown exclusively upon him. It is worthy of remark, that the secretly arranged term of his

* See Letters pp. 390-397.

service, was the completion of this enormous enterprise. Lord Castlereagh, as Secretary of State for the Colonies and War, had unquestionably much of the preparation of this armament. He did not, however, suggest it, nor support it in opposition to his colleagues; he had nothing to do with the appointment of the commanders, and for the ignorance of the locality to which, in combination with the incapacity of those commanders, the failure of the expedition may fairly be attributed, he was less responsible than the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, the director of the ministerial confederacy to which he was to give way.*

Soon after Lord Castlereagh became aware of the proceedings of his friends in office, he did not fail to penetrate their true character, and trace their responsible source. His line was immediately taken. On the 19th of September, he wrote a spirited appeal to Mr. Canning; it produced the intended effect, for with a hostile meeting in contemplation, a friend was secured in Mr. Charles Ellis, with whom on the morning of the 21st, he repaired to his residence on Putney Heath, where they met by appointment, Lord Castlereagh attended by Lord Yarmouth, and Mr., afterwards Sir Everard Home, the eminent surgeon. Before the usual preliminaries were completed, an attempt was made to effect a reconciliation, by Mr. Ellis volunteering the statement that the secresy with which Mr. Canning had maintained the intention of dismissing Lord Castlereagh at a cer-

* Castlereagh Correspondence, Vol. I., p. 11.

tain date—that feature in the proceedings against him of which his lordship most bitterly complained, as it led him into a false confidence, and heaped upon him a load of unnecessary responsibility and undeserved odium—was maintained by the express orders of the King.

The communication was not considered satisfactory, and the parties were placed. The first fire was ineffective. No apology having been proffered, a second took place, when Mr. Canning received his adversary's ball in the thigh, and Lord Castlereagh had a button shot off the right lapel of his coat. Mr. Canning's wound was not attended with worse consequences than a few weeks confinement.

Lord Castlereagh addressed a letter to the King, soon after the duel, and his Majesty's reply, dated October 3rd, expressed both sympathy and approval. His knowledge of the case is thus stated:

"The King does not recollect any communication to him of Mr. Canning's letter, of the 24th of March last, to which Lord Castlereagh refers, *nor has want of zeal or of efficiency, on the part of Lord Castlereagh in the execution of the duties of his department* ever been urged on his Majesty, as a ground for the arrangement which was suggested. The Duke of Portland stated verbally to the King in May last, *that difficulties had arisen from Mr. Canning's representation,* that the duties of the Foreign and Colonial departments clashed, and that unless some arrangement could be made *for the removal of Lord Castlereagh,* he had reason to believe *that*

Mr. Canning would resign his situation in the government. This was the reason assigned to his Majesty; and in June, *Lord Wellesley's* name was first submitted to him as *the eventual successor to Lord Castlereagh.*"

His Majesty then added, "the King has no hesitation in assuring Lord Castlereagh, that he has *at all times* been satisfied *with the zeal and assiduity* with which he has discharged the duties of the various situations which he has filled, and with the exertions which, *under every difficulty*, he has made for the support of his Majesty's and the country's interest. His Majesty must ever approve the principle which shall secure the support and protection of government to officers exposing their reputation as well as their lives in his service, *when their characters and conduct are attacked and aspersed upon loose and insufficient grounds, without adverting to embarrassments and local difficulties, of which those on the spot can alone form an adequate judgment.**"

That recourse should be had to the Grenvilles, upon the secession of the Duke of Portland from severe illness, that soon afterwards terminated in death, and the resignations of Lord Castlereagh and Mr. Canning, was under the circumstances imperative. The reader will presently learn the feelings with which such overtures were received, and the progress and fate of the negotiation.

* Memoir of Viscount Castlereagh, prefixed to his Correspondence, Vol. I., p. 18, 19.

MR. T. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Castle Hill, Sept. 21, 1809.

MY DEAREST BROTHER,

I find here, as everywhere else, an increasing impression of the very tottering condition of the government, and of the certainty of some change taking place. The "Globe" of to-day assures us, that a messenger is sent off to Lord Grey, and it would be well for the public, if there was any foundation for that report, but I am entirely persuaded with you, that everything will be risked in preference to having resort either to Lord Grey or Lord Grenville; and our friends at Boconnoc are as strongly convinced of this as you and I can be. If therefore the present vacancies can be so arranged as to make room for Lord Sidmouth, I suppose it is probable enough that he will join them under Lord Bathurst's standard. I say Lord Bathurst upon your authority, for the last account that I heard, had represented Earl Harrowby, as the new magpie that was to succeed the old one. Six months ago I should have thought this a likely opening for Lord Moira, but Lord St. Vincent very lately sent me a letter of Lord Moira's, containing such bitter complaints of the present government, that it is not easy to believe that he can ever forgive them. He supposes them to have circulated a report, that the command of the Scheldt expedition had been destined to Lord Moira, but that he was found so impracticable, that another appointment became necessary, "whereas the truth is, that there never was a single word said to me upon the subject."

I hear that Hood is got well, and expects to be sent out to the Mediterranean; if Lord Mulgrave knew what he was about, he would send Hood with a separate command there, for not only is Lord Collingwood quite worn out, but, in truth, a command extending from Cadiz to Constantinople, is more than can be made efficient in one man's hands. I am going with Lord

Fortescue for ten days to Lord Cawdor, at Stacpole, then Trentham, then Stowe.

P.S. I heard lately so bad an account of Lord Melville's health, that I should doubt whether there can be question of him. General Paget had been named to Gibraltar to command there, but he declines going, as I hear, because he is well enough for active service! Are they going to send out more expeditions?

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Boconnoc, Sept. 21, 1809.

My dearest Brother,

London news reaches you so much sooner than it comes here, that long before this you will know of the resignation of the Duke of Portland, Castlereagh, and, though last, not least, Canning and Co.

If my London correspondents can be relied on, the gentlemen who remain have a project of proposing to Grey and me to accept of the vacated offices, or on some other terms to help to patch up their government. This project, if it exists, admits of two versions; the one that they really mean that such a plan should take place, and thus ensure to them the double object of keeping their own places, and excluding their late colleagues, whom just at this moment they probably hate worse than us. The other, and in my judgment the more probable, is, that they mean only to lead us into a negotiation, in order that they may have the opportunity of appealing to the feelings of the country in behalf of the King, against what they will call our unreasonable demands of being allowed to save his kingdom in spite of his prejudices, and that the Court will then throw itself on Lord Sidmouth's protection. Still, all this (if my information is correct) must in either case lead to my being again involved in discussions, to which I verily hoped I had bid a long farewell.

If I am compelled to come nearer London (and, unless absolutely compelled, you will easily see that I shall not volunteer such a journey); but if absolutely compelled, I shall return to Dropmore. Of course, my first anxiety must be to see you, and to learn your sentiments on every step I can be called upon to take, or to refuse to take in such a business. And I should, in that case, hope to prevail upon you to cross the country to me there.

Most earnestly do I wish that I could persuade myself that all this is a false alarm; but I know not how to think it so. That it will not end at this time in the formation of such a government as I should like to take a share in, I am quite persuaded; but the mode of arriving at this conclusion will be matter of extreme delicacy, and of the utmost anxiety to us all.

God bless you! You shall hear more from me as soon as I myself know anything on which I can depend.

22nd. I wrote this last night, forgetting that it was a day when our post does not go to London. I have no letters from thence this evening, by which I collect, at least, that the delectable project above-mentioned is not as ripe as I had been taught to believe it was. How glad I should be to think that my fears are no better founded than my uncle's hopes, when he used to sit at home, full-dressed, ready to be sent for.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Boconnoc, Sept. 24, 1809.

My dearest Brother,

I have just time to save the post, to say that I have this instant received a letter from Perceval, desiring me, in the King's name, to come to town to communicate with him and Lord Liverpool, for the purpose of forming an extended administration.

My answer will probably be, that as I consider this as an official signification of the King's pleasure that I should come

to town, it is my duty to obey; and that for the rest, whatever my impressions may be, I must decline explaining myself till I see my friends.

I thought I could not help going to town; but I do not think anybody would advise me to negotiate with Liverpool and Perceval for such a purpose.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Boconnoc, Sept. 23, 1809.

My dearest Brother,

It seems whimsical that I should be sending you information from this place to Stowe, of what is passing in London; but I believe my sources of intelligence so good, that it may be useful you should know, not what is the state of things at the moment you receive my letter, but what it was a week before.

Canning and Castlereagh had long been at variance. In the spring, the former declared to the Duke of Portland and some other of his colleagues, that he could not continue in office with Castlereagh War Minister. Just at that time, the famous East India patronage report came out, and this was made a plea to Canning, for not bringing the matter to a point then.

Now, upon the Duke of Portland declaring himself positively unable to continue, Canning resigns, because Castlereagh has not yet been turned out; and Castlereagh, because his colleagues knew of Canning's requisition for his dismission, and concealed it from him. With this, however, was, of course, coupled the apple of discord—the lead, as it is called (like *lucus a non lucendo*) of that very leadable body, the House of Commons, and the desirable office of making provision, in the character of First Lord of the Treasury, or Chancellor of the Exchequer, by fresh taxes to be imposed on a people so remarkably patient under their present burthens, for all the sums that have this year been lavishly wasted.

To these delights Perceval aspires, from his former success, in finance measures and debates; and these, Canning contests with him; and not obtaining them, resigns.

MR. T. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Castle Hill, 24th Sept., 1809.

My dearest Brother,

The dissolution of the Ministry has been more rapidly hurried on then I could have expected, and the Putney duel added to the resignations of the Duke of Portland, Lord Castlereagh, Canning, Huskisson, and Sturges Bourne, is a complete break-up, and seems to be almost out of the reach of doctoring; at the same time I continue to believe that this prescription will be tried in preference to any other. William's letters speak of the probability of some overture to Lord Grey and himself, but this may very probably be only a manœuvre; it would not in the least surprise me to see some such offer made in a shape that it would be disgraceful to accept, in order then to cry out upon the unreasonableness of our demands, and to raise upon it a good loud clamour of Church and King, and the Pope and the Whore of Babylon, and an appeal to the people to rally round the throne for the defence of their old King, in the 50th and Jubilee year of his reign; and weak and wicked as all this nonsense is, it would run like wild-fire in every parish in England and in Wales.

I look at the politics of the present day with a very heavy heart, for I am sure I never remember a state of things that offered so much to fear and so little to hope. My mind, however, is strongly impressed with the notion that there is little, if any chance of such overtures being made to us, as it could be either safe or honourable to accept, and anything short of that, would, as I think, be an act of desperate madness to engage in. The times and circumstances are such, however, as defy speculation,

and, therefore, create an anxiety much greater than usually belongs even to the discussion of the most important political changes. If they are to try to patch all this up among themselves, though I think it cannot go on, still it will relieve us for the present, and I should resume my former plans of amusement. If anything should arise, which must bring us nearer to this political turmoil, I have, however, the comfort of knowing that it must bring us within your reach, and must give us the benefit of your advice and assistance; but upon the whole, I incline to think that the probability is, that the Sidmouths will be immediately pieced on, and that it will so be tried; but how can it do? how can they control the House of Commons, with Canning and his friends against them, when they could not control it with his assistance? What is to become of the House of Commons, in any possible shape of government? There is no answer to these difficulties. God send that the solution of them may not be with us.

MR. PERCEVAL TO LORD GRENVILLE.

Windsor, Sept. 23, 1809.

My Lord,

The Duke of Portland having signified to his Majesty, his intention of retiring from his Majesty's service, in consequence of the state of his Grace's health, his Majesty has authorised Lord Liverpool, in conjunction with myself, to communicate with your Lordship and Lord Grey, for the purpose of forming an extended and combined administration.

I hope, therefore, that your Lordship, in consequence of this communication, will come to town, in order that as little time as possible may be lost in forwarding this important object; and that you will have the goodness to inform me of your arrival.

I am also to acquaint your Lordship that I have received his Majesty's commands to make a similar communication to Lord Grey, of his Majesty's pleasure.

I think it proper to add, for your Lordship's information, that Lord Castlereagh and Mr. Secretary Canning, have intimated their intentions to resign their offices.

I have, &c.,

SP. PERCEVAL.

LORD GRENVILLE TO MR. PERCEVAL.

Boconnoc, Sept. 25, 1809.

SIR,

I have the honour to acknowledge your letter of the 23rd inst., and understanding it as an official signification of his Majesty's pleasure for my attendance in town, I shall lose no time in repairing thither, in humble obedience to his Majesty's commands.

I must beg leave to defer until my arrival, all observations on the other matters to which your letter relates.

I have, &c.,

GRENVILLE.

LORD GRENVILLE TO MR. PERCEVAL.

Camelford House, Sept. 29, 1809.

SIR,

Having last night arrived here, in humble obedience to his Majesty's commands, I think it now my duty to lose no time in expressing to you the necessity under which I feel myself of declining the communication proposed in your letter, being satisfied that it could not, under the circumstances there mentioned, be productive of any public advantage.

I trust I need not say that this opinion is neither founded in any sentiment of personal hostility, nor in a desire of unnecessarily prolonging political differences.

To compose, not to inflame the divisions of the empire, has always been my anxious wish, and is now more than ever the

duty of every loyal subject. But my accession to the existing administration could, I am confident, in no respect contribute to this object; nor could it, I think, be considered in any other light than as a dereliction of public principle.

This answer, which I must have given to any such proposal, if made while this government was yet entire, cannot be varied by the retreat of any of its members.

My objections are not personal; they apply to the principle of the government itself, and to the circumstances which attended its appointment.

I have now, therefore, only to request that you will do me the honour of submitting in the most respectful terms, these my humble opinions to his Majesty; accompanied by the dutiful and sincere assurance of my earnest desire at all times to testify by all such means as are in my power, my unvaried zeal for his Majesty's service.

I have, &c.,

GRENVILLE.

"The proposal was probably not intended as an insult to Lord Grenville and Lord Grey; but surely no greater insult could be offered to any public men, than to suppose them so eager to be in office, that they would unite in an administration with persons whom they had constantly represented as having supplanted them in office by a dark and disgraceful intrigue, as having set up a false cry of danger in the church, in order to excite the populace against them, and as having entered on their office upon the most unconstitutional principles. Even if they were dead to all sense of honour, and were regardless of everything but their own interests, they could not have listened for a moment to such a proposal. The consequence would

have been that degraded in character, they would in a short time have been again dismissed through the intrigues of their colleagues, and could never have become again formidable to any administration however constituted."*

MR. T. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Cleveland Square, Friday, Sept 29, 1809.

My dearest Brother,

When I arrived at Boconnoc on Monday night, I found that Perceval's letter had preceded me, and my brother told me that he had already written to you, to describe the summons that he had received, together with his answer, professing that his obedience to the King's commands would carry him to town, and begging to be excused saying more till he came to town.

Upon his arrival last night, he found that Lord Grey had availed himself of the equivocal wording of part of Perceval's letter, and had stated that doubt as the reason of his not coming. I send you enclosed the copies of Lord Grey's letter to Perceval, and of Lord Grenville's letter to Perceval, sent this morning; you will see that both these letters concur in the main point, of declining to have any communication with the Ministers, upon the ground of forming an accession to this administration. The government papers will, perhaps, have their squibs upon Lord Grey's staying, and Lord Grenville's coming; but this is only, as you see, a different interpretation of a letter, purposely written with ambiguity; and is, in fact, a censure upon Perceval, for not clearly saying, in distinct words, what were the King's commands. Upon the whole, I think more misrepresentation would have been incurred by Lord Grenville, if he had remained

* Diary of Sir Samuel Romilly in Memoirs, Vol. II., p. 301.

in Cornwall, and I am satisfied he has done the best, for many reasons, in coming.

What is the next scene of Perceval's play, I have not the sagacity to foresee; some people think that they have merely made this effort to please the King, and that they will now resign; others think that they will set up the Duke of Richmond, and Lord Sidmouth and Lord Wellesley, in conjunction with the present remnant, and that they will make a struggle, more or less ineffectual. Perhaps something of this sort may be tried, and after what has succeeded for two years, one knows not how little may do to go on. At the same time, unless they can create a new strength, by some Catholic inflammation, I know not how they can put a face on to meet the parliament. The Prince is highly pleased with Lord Grenville's having written to him, and is gracious in the extreme.

Lord H. Petty is in Ireland, and his brother is not immediately in danger, but continues in a very hazardous state of health. Lord Holland and Tierney are in town, but nobody else. Lord Spencer is yeomaning at Althorp, where he stays another week. Lord G. Leveson has declared his intention to resign, but he still does the business of his office, and both he and Castlereagh attended Cabinet last Saturday.

LORD GRENVILLE TO EARL TEMPLE.

Camelford House, Sept. 30, 1809.

My dear Temple,

You will receive by this post the papers that have passed between Perceval and me; and I doubt not you will judge (as indeed every other individual who is apprised of the transaction has judged) that no other answer could be given.

I have considered Perceval's last letter as mere quibbling; and as it is not written by the King's authority, I saw no reason to continue the correspondence.

What is to follow next, I am totally at a loss to conceive. One hears reports too ridiculous for belief, of schemes of patchwork; but Wellesley is said to be pledged to Canning. Lord Ellenborough has this day expressed to me his approbation, which implies Sidmouth's; and where else allies are to be found, I cannot guess.

Ever most affectionately yours,

G.

Not succeeding in strengthening a weak party by the absorption of a strong one, that portion of the Ministry which remained in office, appear to have determined to carry on the government, as well as they were able—in this completely realising the predictions of Lord Grenville. Mr. Perceval took the place of the Duke of Portland, and his first official duty was to write to the Prince of Wales to acknowledge himself his Royal Highness's very humble servant. The Prince, it would appear, treated the intimation with anything but respect.

COLONEL M'MAHON TO LORD GRENVILLE.

Carleton House, Oct. 3, 1809.

My Lord,

The Prince being unable at this moment to write to your Lordship himself, has commanded me to have the honour of enclosing you the copy of a letter, which his Royal Highness received last night from Mr. Perceval, together with his answer; and the Prince requests your Lordship will have the goodness to shew it to the Marquis of Buckingham, as he cannot but think such a ludicrous circumstance cannot fail to divert him.

I have the honour to be,

With great respect and regard,

Your Lordship's very faithful and obedient servant,

J. M'Mahon.

MR. PERCEVAL TO THE PRINCE OF WALES.

Mr. Perceval humbly hopes that his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, will have the indulgence to see in the nature of this communincation, the apology for Mr. Perceval's presumption in obtruding himself upon his Royal Highness.

Mr. Perceval would have felt himself wanting in duty and respect to his Royal Highness, if he lost any time in acquainting him, that his Majesty has this day been most graciously pleased to communicate to Mr. Perceval his commands, that Mr. Perceval should succeed the Duke of Portland, as First Lord of the Treasury. Mr. Perceval begs leave to assure his Royal Highness, that conscious as he is of the importance and necessity of a strong government in these arduous times, he would have gladly seen that office in the hands of Lord Grey, or Lord Grenville, if the union could have been effected, which, under his Majesty's authority, Mr. Perceval attempted to accomplish between the members and friends of the present administration, and those noble lords and their friends; but, that attempt having failed, Mr. Perceval has not conceived that it would have been consistent with his duty to his Majesty or to his country, especially considering the grounds on which it has failed, to do otherwise than cheerfully and gratefully to obey his Majesty's most gracious command.

Downing Street, Oct. 2, 1809.

THE PRINCE OF WALES TO MR. PERCEVAL.

The Prince of Wales, on his return home, found Mr. Perceval's letter, and returns him many thanks for his polite communication.

Carleton House, Monday Night, Oct. 2. 1809.

The Marquis Wellesley had been sent for from Spain on the breaking out of the Canning and Castlereagh quarrel.

MR. T. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Cleveland Square, Oct. 5, 1809.

My dearest Brother,

The government, which has been announced these three days, is probably now kissing hands. It is a woeful patch, and so it is universally considered. My guess, however, is, that Lord Wellesley will not be able to keep his hands off the Foreign Seals, whenever Harrowby holds them before his eyes; and Wellesley Pole being named to Ireland, it seems evident that they are all to take part with this government. If my information is right—and it comes from a very good source—the new Ministers themselves do not affect to say that they can await even the first meeting of parliament; but one of them, high in office, said two days ago, that, though they could not stand, yet they were assured from the highest authority, that their successors would not be allowed to remain three months. I believe you may quite depend upon the truth of this intelligence, although it sounds incredibly wicked on the part of those who are content to form a government which they themselves who form it, profess that they cannot continue to hold so soon as parliament shall meet. Huskisson, who has resigned, says he believes they may hold out for money till January; that it will be wrong to risk it, but that he thinks they can and will. I do not find anybody, friend or foe, who does not approve all that we have done in this foolish and counterfeit negotiation of Percevals. I hear that his own proposal would have been to have left the Treasury to Lord Grenville, and to have taken to himself the Home Seals for the security of Ireland and the Catholic question.

This was a most precarious project; but if they meant to

produce a sensation in the public by our refusal, they appear to have totally failed.

MR. T. GRENVILLE TO EARL TEMPLE.

Cleveland Square, Oct. 5, 1809.

My dear Lord Temple,

I am just stepping into my post-chaise for Dropmore, and write you this line to tell you, that though Perceval alone kissed hands yesterday, I believe the same arrangement is certainly to take place, except that Lord William is not Secretary at War; and I know not who is.

George Rose says, that "his inclination is quite with that fine young man, Canning, but his duty and conscience compel him to remain." Long says nothing, but keeps his place. I am convinced that Lord Wellesley will accept, and although it is said H. Wellesley refused Canning's offer of Lisbon, that does not alter my opinion. What do you think of Canning, four or five days ago only, naming B. Frere, Minister Plenipotentiary to the Junta, in Lord Wellesley's absence? I have not all the admiration which G. Rose professes for "that fine young man," nor do I like him a bit better for the road which he has chosen to take out of office into Opposition, after six months of political intrigue against Lord Castlereagh.

Yours ever, most affectionately,

T. G.

MR. T. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Cleveland Square, Oct. 5.

Dearest Brother,

While my chaise is waiting to carry me to Dropmore, I write one line, to tell you that, though Perceval only kissed hands yesterday, the same arrangement is considered as being quite settled, except that Lord W. B. is not Secretary at War, and nobody knows who is.

G. Rose says his inclination is all with that fine young man, Mr. Canning, but his honour and conscience will not allow him to follow him in his resignation. C. Long says nothing, but keeps his office. That fine young man, Mr. Canning, only a week ago has named B. Frere, Minister Plenipotentiary to the Junta, and has offered Lisbon to H. Wellesley, who demurs. That Lord Wellesley will accept Canning's seals, I have not the least doubt, though the Canningites affect to disbelieve it.

These new converts to Opposition are open-mouthed against everything done and undone; they say the finances are raised, as well as the army. What have they themselves been about then for the last two years? I, myself, am anything, rather than a Canningite.

I hear the Duke of Cumberland is disgusted with these new people, which looks as if they had not consulted him enough. I will come to you when the French are routed.*

The strong opinions expressed in the following communication respecting the conduct of Mr. Canning and his confederates, towards Lord Castlereagh, were shared by some of the leading public men of the day, who were unconnected with the government. The subsequent letter refers to the Chancellorship of Oxford, for which distinction Lord Grenville was induced to become a candidate.

MR. T. GRENVILLE TO EARL TEMPLE.

Dropmore, Oct. 19, 1809.

My dear Lord Temple,

If I have hitherto delayed to answer your letter, it is because

* The French Court, then staying at Stowe.

for the last ten days I have always been in expectation of having something to communicate to you in the shape of news, which might make my correspondence more interesting to you; but, in truth, the embarrassments of Perceval to find names for his vacancies, still prevail so much, that, with the exception of Mr. Croker, the public has not yet heard another new name in discussion, and so lately as two days ago, Lord G. Leveson was told that it might still be ten days before his successor was appointed. In the meantime, the more we hear of all the nasty scenes of low intrigue which have so much disgraced every member, past and present, of the King's cabinet, the greater and the more general becomes the sentiment of disgust which must arise in every honest mind upon the view of the disgraceful position in which the King's ministers have stood for the last six months, both with respect to themselves and with respect to the country.

That a whole cabinet of gentlemen should consent for six months together to sit in amicable and confidential intercourse with Castlereagh, while they had mutually bound themselves to each other to require his removal, from their sense of his incapacity, is a scene, as far as anything I know and hope, unlike anything that has happened in our history; but if, in this point of view, they appear to have forgot all the duties of social intercourse, and all the obligations of gentlemen, how will they stand in the duties which they owe to their country, after it is manifested that though they were all agreed in the month of March as to the incapacity of Castlereagh to conduct the war, they suffered him to continue to direct that important department, and to manage the whole course of the campaign till the month of October, for six months together, after they and their master had been agreed upon the absolute necessity of his removal from their own sense of his incapacity. This is all in my eyes, quite horrible.

There is no man more an enemy than I am to political proscription; I dislike it still the more, because such proscriptions

are systematically nourished, and have always been so in this reign, to enable the Crown to break the influence of numerous and connected parties; I dislike, therefore, all notion of proscription, but something is due to one's own character in the political connections that one forms, and the times that we live in demand more than usual circumspection on this subject; nor is it unreasonable that the country should require its Ministers to have confidence in one another before they can be entitled to ask the confidence of the public.

Another important consideration arises from the reflection that to the present, and also to the ex-members of this administration, belong the measures of the Spanish and Flemish expeditions, of the American Treaty, and of that wild, restless, and childish fever of expense, which they have had the senseless folly to think would be fitly contrasted with that defensive system which they have all stated as being the reproach of our government. I write this to you in confidence, my dear Temple, but I write it in that reserve, as a comment upon, and confirmation of your own observations, and you will see from the frank manner in which I express myself, that if there is any such question of Cabinet union as that to which you advert, which I have no reason to suspect, my sentiments are such as would render it impossible for me to take any part in such an arrangement. Of course, I need not repeat to you, that I write this to you in perfect confidence.

I find much difference as to the speculations on Lord Wellesley's refusal or acceptance; my belief is that he will accept—but whether he does or no, I think Perceval's government cannot so sustain itself. My expectation is that some other effort will be made by Perceval to obtain Lord Sidmouth's assistance, that probably Lord Sidmouth would decline that on any other ground, except that of saving the King's conscience from being forced by Lord Grey and Lord Grenville, and that some new explanation will be asked from them, in order to revive the topic of No Popery, and to enable Perceval and Lord Sidmouth to unite

upon that ground, and that ground only. These are my speculations, and such as they are you must take them, for I have no better intelligence to give you.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Dropmore, Oct. 27, 1809.

MY DEAREST BROTHER,

The Oxford reports still continue very favourable. The neutrality of the Christ Church seems certain; and if they are neutral as a body, I shall most certainly pick up very many of them individually. No opponent is declared, but I presume the Vice-Chancellor will bring one down with him on Thursday; yet who, I cannot guess.

Dundas Saunders has certainly declined, and the general opinion seems to be that this string cannot do. But I suppose Perceval will wait for Wellesley's answer. I hear to-day, that he is, on his arrival, to offer him, *carte blanche*, the Treasury, or anything. This is being hard pressed indeed.

Not one Minister was at Frogmore; there are not many of them, but their absence is curious.

Can you do anything with a Mr. Palmer, of Mixbury, to influence Grant, of Brazenose. Do you know anything of the two chaplains at Merton, Wheler and Fausset?

The Duke of Portland is said to be better. Some accounts say he is considered to have weathered this attack; others, that he may live a few weeks, or may not last a day. My Oxford friends think delay in my favour. I rather judge the contrary.

I had almost forgot to mention about the list which Mr. Barnard will bring over with him to Stowe. Hodson and Moss think that the printing this list, and circulating it before the vacancy actually arises, may give offence. I do not see much in this, but they are the best judges; and I ought, at all

events, to defer to their opinion. Perhaps you could find the means of having a hundred or two of written copies made, as it is merely a list of names. If this is too great a number, the more you can get done the better; and I will thank you to send me some.

The Marquis of Buckingham felt a lively interest in the success of that distinguished officer whose first step in the path of honour had been taken under his auspices, and continued to afford him the stimulus of cordial approval during the many trials he underwent in the Peninsula. That Lord Wellington was not insensible of this kindness, we present proof under his own hand; in other respects the communication is of great interest, for its graphic references to the aspect of affairs in Spain and at home. His closing aspiration indicates, at once, his good sense and patriotism. The organization of parties had not been productive of much benefit to the country, and had often been the source of very serious evil.

VISCOUNT WELLINGTON TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Badajoz, Nov. 16, 1809.

My dear Lord,

Admiral Berkeley delivered to me your very kind letter of the 23rd August, when I was at Lisbon in October; and as I have since been in different parts of the country, I have not had an opportunity of thanking you for it. I assure you that I am very sensible of all your kindness towards me, and grateful for the repeated marks of it which I have received since I entered your service as your aide-de-camp.

Your Lordship, although at a distance, has formed a very

correct notion of the relative state of the force of the French, and of the allies in Spain. In truth, if we had been able to force the French back to the Ebro, we should have been opposed by larger numbers than we had till then had to contend with; and the circumstances which obliged us to cross the Tagus, after the victory at Talavera, were principally the march into Estramadura of a part only of the force which would have been opposed to us upon the Ebro, if the French had not preferred to abandon all their possessions to the northward, in order to oppose us with this force on the Tagus. I never thought that the allies would derive any military advantage from obliging the French to retire to the Ebro, excepting that of uniting the armies of Estramadura and New Castille, with the troops in Valencia; and of opening a direct communication with that rich province. The possession of the capital was a political object of great importance at that moment, in a view to the affairs of Europe in general, as well as of those in Spain; and it was desirable to extend as much as possible, the government of the Junta; and it was expected that the credit gained by the success of these first operations would have added strength to the armies. But if the French had not brought the greatest part of their force to bear upon the Tagus, and had allowed the war to be transferred to the Ebro, I should have been as cautious of approaching that river, as I have since been of crossing the Tagus. All this shews that you are quite right in your notion of our relative force.

In a war, such as that which is at present carried on in Spain, it is necessary, perhaps, to attend a little to popular opinion and prejudice; and with this view to undertake operations at times not exactly dictated by views of military expediency or prudence. I think the Spanish government attend too much to popular opinion—in fact, they have no other guide, and I am much afraid that their desire to effect some great operation, which will gain for themselves general popular applause, has prevented

them from resorting to the more slow, but more certain plans of operation, and will risk the success of all our objects. I am afraid that their army in La Mancha is upon the eve of a general action, in which I cannot hope for success. If not entirely destroyed by this or similar imprudent measures, I think Spain is still to be saved by perseverance and activity, notwithstanding the peace in Germany, if the people choose to be saved.

I shall not say much to your Lordship about home politics. I regret, and am almost ashamed of what has passed in England lately. I am no party politician, but I wish that old friends would unite and form a strong government to carry the country through its difficulties, and I hope that the day is not very distant, on which people will find out that the best way of serving the country is not by forming parties to oppose or support particular men.

Pray present my best respects to Lady Buckingham and Lord and Lady Temple, and Lady Mary, and

Believe me, my dear Lord,
Ever your most affectionate, and faithful, humble servant,
WELLINGTON.

The following exposition of the political intrigue, referred to in a preceding page, will be found well worthy of attention. The writer possessed opportunities of obtaining information from peculiar sources. In this instance, he appears to have been particularly well-informed; and deserves confidence not only on this account, but because his statement is corroborated by unquestionable evidence.

——— TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Dec. 4, 1809.

Your Lordship will bear in your recollection that although Lord Wellesley's not taking office himself on Lord Grenville's administration breaking up, gained him no credit whatever with the friends of Lord Grenville, it was affected to be taken in high dudgeon by Mr. Canning, and that, for a considerable period after the formation of the Duke of Portland's government, no correspondence whatever, existed between that gentleman and Lord Wellesley; but, on the contrary, that the latter experienced a series of slights, sufficiently pointed and mortifying, from the former, on almost every occasion which presented itself. This conduct was persisted in without variation till the beginning of this year, when Mr. Canning (most probably finding the necessity of offering up some sacrifice to the public feeling, then much excited as well by the Duke of York's affairs, as by other proofs of the weakness of administration), meditated the dismission of Lord Castlereagh—a measure to which he was prompted by the belief that it would be a popular one in itself, that he might thereby acquire a more pliant war minister, than it seems Lord Castlereagh had proved towards him (Mr. Canning); and finally, I am willing to believe, that thus, a more able man might be added to the public service. With these views, he solicited interviews with Lord Wellesley last spring; and it was speedily recognized as a point of union, and to be one of action between these personages, that the administration was feeble in its organization, and inefficient in its measures, but, above all, that the entire conduct of the war, and the hands in which it was placed, must suffer a total change, or the ministry be broken up. In this understanding, Lord Wellesley did not hesitate to engage his cooperation as a member of the existing Cabinet, whenever such a vacancy should be made, as would ensure

the above-named grand *desiderata;* Lord Wellesley always premising, that whatever office he held, he should have a principal share in the management of the war, and also constantly deprecating in any event, the resignation of Mr. Canning, which his Lordship considered ruinous to every view of keeping the friends of the present government together.

The affair of the writership, in which the indiscretion and indecorum of Lord Castlereagh, combined with the general expression of public sentiment then afloat, leaving scarcely a doubt of his incurring parliamentary censure, (after which his remaining in office would have been impossible,) and which followed closely on the heels of this mutual understanding, seemed for a moment to smooth every difficulty which presented itself to the removal of Lord Castlereagh, and the appointment of Lord Wellesley in his place. Your Lordship knows how that affair terminated—certainly very much to the disappointment of Lord Wellesley, Mr. Canning, and the public; and that a majority in his (Lord Castlereagh's) favour remained to him sufficiently colourable to allow of his standing his ground, and to afford him pretension to make head at a future day against any attempts of his colleagues to dislodge him. On this part of the subject, two remarks present themselves, sufficiently obvious, namely, that had Mr. Perceval been as eager for the above arrangement as Mr. Canning, the House could easily have been managed so as to have effected it; and next, that nothing could conduce more to the support of Lord Castlereagh in parliament than the openness with which, at this period, the negotiations between Lord Wellesley and Mr. Canning were carried on—the objects of which were not to be mistaken; circumstances which mark, in no small degree, the confidence and presumption of at least one of the parties concerned.

To atone Lord Wellesley for the mortification he must have experienced in this matter, the embassy to Spain, (an appointment immediately in Mr. Canning's nomination,) was devised,

offered to Lord Wellesley, and accepted with the following expressed understanding by him. That the stay of the Marquis in Spain, should not exceed two months; powers and appointments as ample as they could be framed; and lastly, that within that time such a change should take place in the Cabinet, as would give Lord Wellesley the option of coming into it, on the footing originally intended.

In order to effect such change, Mr. Canning set himself to work out Lord Castlereagh, in the way his own statement, and other proofs which might be adduced, sufficiently prove—but here he again experienced a foil. As his own conduct towards Lord Castlereagh had, in the instance above alluded to, been too hostile to have ever admitted of a good understanding between them, so nothing less than his (Lord Castlereagh's) total dismission from the government, would satisfy him. Thus although Lord Camden offered (I think with almost unparalleled disinterestedness and friendship) immediately upon Mr. Canning's strong protest against Lord Castlereagh's sufficiency for the office he filled, both to the Cabinet and the King, to make room, by his resignation, for the adjustment of all differences, in which case, Lord Wellesley was to be offered the Presidentship of the Council, the conduct of the war to be united to the Foreign Department, and Lord Castlereagh to be left in possession of the Colonial branch of his office; and although Lord Wellesley offered to join the government upon these terms, thus "strengthening" it, agreeably to Mr. Canning's own phrase, he, Mr. Canning, refused to accede to such arrangement, and proffered his own resignation in its room.

In this conduct, no kindness can be discovered towards Lord Wellesley, nor any other view than unaccommodating pertenacity in dictating to his colleagues, and close attention to his own personal consequence; for, in the proposed arrangement, he saw no additional weight to be derived to himself from the bringing in Lord Wellesley to the Cabinet; as the retaining Lord

Castlereagh there, would completely balance such (supposed) acquisition.

On this treaty going off, Mr. Canning's remonstrances, protests, and offers of resignation, were reiterated with increased querulousness, and Lord Wellesley was entreated to abide the issue in this country; in point of fact, the latter had no alternative, for two months after his actual appointment to the Spanish mission, he received no instructions whatever, nor did they reach him till he was notoriously incapacitated by a most severe fit of gout from travelling. Thus this delay in his departure, and the illness itself, which have been called political, and charged upon the Marquis as feigned, must be ascribed, the former to Mr. Canning, the latter to personal misfortune. In reality, it was Lord Wellesley's interest as well as inclination to have expedited rather than have retarded his departure. The sooner he went, the speedier (agreeably to actual contract) his return; and as Spain was to be the portal through which he was to pass to office, the sooner he left it behind him the better. But a parity of reasoning operated to produce a quite contrary effect in the mind of Mr. Canning. The longer he detained Lord Wellesley in this country, to a greater distance did he remove the fulfilment of an engagement he found pregnant with difficulties; add to which, that he deeply felt the disturbing the consequence of his *achates,* Frere, in Spain, whom he wished to continue as long in power as possible; and, finally, that the increasing infirmities of the Duke of Portland, made it highly desirable that Lord Wellesley should be actually out of this country, in the event of his Grace's demise, a circumstance rendered more than probable by this detention.

At length, Lord Wellesley's recovery rendering it competent to him to undertake his voyage to Spain, he was suffered to proceed. And here I beg to say one word on the subject of Mr. Frere. During the whole period of Lord Wellesley's residence in that country, so far from his deriving any assistance

or co-operation from the "Marquis of Union," that illustrious personage was not of the slightest service to the objects of the mission; but, on the contrary, there is every reason to believe that he thwarted and counteracted them on every possible occasion.

Almost immediately, before Lord Wellesley's departure, the Duke of Portland, wearied out by the dissentions of administration, by the failure of arrangement upon arrangement, for strengthening the government, as it was termed, and warned by internal feeling of his approaching end, now proposed, himself, to resign; and actually carried that measure into effect. Here, one would think, was a solution for every difficulty. But, alas! no; Mr. Canning again interposed his *veto* to all arrangement founded upon the Duke's resignation; for which he said, "there could be no compensating advantage whatever," and tendered his own instantly, on that event taking place. His views in this conduct cannot, I think, be mistaken—Lord Wellesley was still in the country; his colleagues, at least a majority of them, were willing to offer that nobleman the Treasury; nor could he, without a rupture with the latter, either put his own claims in competition, or put a negative on the appointment altogether. In consequence of this conduct of Mr. Canning, the King was prevailed upon to press the Duke of Portland to hold the Seals for some time longer, and which the latter assented to, rather than "break up the government," which it was supposed (erroneously, as it has proved,) would be the consequence of Mr. Canning's receding from it.

The Duke of Portland's death put a period to his administration, and now—Lord Wellesley in Spain—Mr. Canning's views began to develope themselves more clearly. As a Premier must now be named in the negotiations which took place for that purpose, between those most interested in it, Mr. Canning laid it down as a principle from which he would not depart, namely "that it was indispensably necessary to the carrying on

the King's government, as it was now constituted, that the first Commissioner of the Treasury should be in the House of Commons." This theory being so laid down, it was quickly found that its practice would apply in no possible case to the appointment of any other Commoner to that high office, in Mr. Canning's opinion, but Mr. Canning himself,—to which there was in almost every quarter an universal dissent—at the same time that Mr. Canning's resignation was as universally deprecated. Mr. Perceval, (who has since had the full benefit of this extraordinary doctrine, advanced by his rival,) was not averse to this new canon in the formation of ministers, provided the application of it was in his own regard, but was totally averse to it in that of Mr. Canning. As a *mezzo termino*, however, Mr. Perceval proposed that any of the following named peers, who could be agreed upon, should fill the vacant office: namely, Lord Bathurst, Lord Harrowby, Lord Liverpool, or (to use his own phrase "even" Lord Wellesley. I have written them as he named them, preferentially as they are mentioned. Without objecting individually to any of these personages, Mr. Canning, adhering to his principle, dissented *in toto* to a government so framed; and not being able to carry his own nomination, resigned.

Administration was then formed as it now stands, Lord Bathurst agreeing to hold the Foreign Seals for Lord Wellesley, to whom they were to be offered, till his Lordship's answer could be had from Spain. That answer was favourable to that proposition. Lord Wellesley speedily followed it, and has had the foreign portfolio in his charge since the day after his arrival in England; he will see the King on Wednesday next, *and he will have* THE VACANT GARTER.

It is not to be denied that the friends of Mr. Canning charge Lord Wellesley with the grossest ingratitude in taking office, which they aver is at the expense of formal engagements between them. If my statements be correct, and I have seen a most able *exposé* of the whole, which accompanied Lord Wellesley's

acceptation of the Foreign Seals, and is now in the hands of Mr. Canning, I certainly think, if Lord Wellesley was not deterred by motives entirely extrinsic to Mr. Canning, from taking office, there was none connected with that gentleman which could have operated in reason, or in honour, to have prevented it.

Lord Wellesley agreed, indeed, to act with Mr. Canning, in strengthening the existing government, but Mr. Canning expressly, or by implication, three several times rejected that co-operation, when opportunities presented themselves, favourable to it; and, finally, he rendered it impossible for Lord Wellesley so to co-operate with him, by resigning (a measure always deprecated by Lord Wellesley), and thus breaking up, as much as lay in him, a government which Lord Wellesley was bound to support. Again, the only alternative left to Lord Wellesley, was, either to accept it, as he has done, or decline it, in deference to a dictum laid down by Mr. Canning, to the monstrous doctrine of which, had he assented, he must have relinquished for himself, and his entire order for ever, the eligibility to fill the first office in the State.

The motives for this dissent from Mr. Canning's views, are laid down most ably, and with no preponderance of suavity, in a letter to Canning, of the 7th of October last, from Lord Wellesley, and which that gentleman must sorely feel.

Another question of a widely different nature, arises upon the personal wisdom of Lord Wellesley, in thus endeavouring to uphold a fabric nodding to its fall, in a moment when that fall seems equally near and inevitable. In the first place, your Lordship well knows how necessary office is to Lord Wellesley's existence.

In his present rank, supposing it as short lived as it can well be, he will, by the King's personal favour, add thereto—if the Garter, denied to four Ministers successively, is to be

the test—acquire a following in the country, hitherto denied to him; and he is to be for the future at the head of those who still call themselves Mr. Pitt's friends. "No chance appeared for his coming in with Lord Grenville, but as fifth or sixth, and even then to be compelled to mix with many of his personal enemies." In the meantime, his situation in the Cabinet is this: Lord Bathurst is most devoted to him, and Lord Liverpool is pledged to be totally governed by him in the conduct of the war. For the rest, Perceval is as civil, and, hitherto, as accommodating as possible; and the remaining members of the government are either so insignificant, or so divided among themselves, as to offer no inconvenience to carrying on the government.

——— TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

London, Dec. 11, 1809.

In the course of yesterday (the only day, and then with the utmost precaution, that I can see any person), I had ample means afforded me to verify, as far as *ex parte* statements can do, all I wrote already to your Lordship. I there mentioned a communication of Wellesley to Canning, from Spain on the 7th of October. I since saw one of the 30th, the day on which Lord Wellesley wrote home his acquiescence to the joining the present government. In this letter, he is still more severe on Canning than in the former, of which it is, indeed, almost the echo; so much so, as hardly to be worth repeating, were it not that in this he severely reproaches Canning with his personal views in resigning, as being done at the expense of the King and the existing government, and the abandonment of every public principle on which the latter was formed. He then severely retorts upon him an expression which Canning had the weakness to make in a sort of *fausse confiance* to Lord Wellesley himself, which was, as nearly as I can recollect, when it was mooted on the Duke of Portland's

proposed, or rather actual resignation, just before Lord Wellesley's departure for Spain, that the latter should be Premier. "I am free to confess to you Lord Wellesley, that I had several objections to you personally, as the successor of the Duke of Portland, and one, not the least, is that, with your vigour of mind, and habits of command, you would reduce all the other departmental ministers to cyphers!"

Your Lordship will judge what a scope such an expression would furnish an able man; and how he would use it in Lord Wellesley's circumstances towards a man in Canning's. So is it used, and most unmercifully. But the sting of the whole is in the conclusion, when the writer, expressing much kindness for Canning, declares that he sees not how the latter can now act in the dilemma in which he has brought himself, so as to preserve anything like the consequence he recently had in the country; that even had he "the good fortune" to reconcile himself with his late colleagues, the arrangements he himself had been the sole cause of would not admit of his return to office in a primary situation, and that on the whole, if he could qualify some of the strongest parts of his late conduct in parliament, the best thing he could do, his private interests only considered, would be "*to accommodate matters with his old friends.*" I do assure your Lordship, solemnly, I undercharge this statement, which loses in my hard phrase much of the point, and singular sharpness of the original.

In the meantime, to give your Lordship an idea of what light Canning is at present held in, on my saying that the friends of the latter, as well as himself, would make a clamour on Lord Wellesley's taking office without him, it was instantly replied, by a person deeply interested, "do you think there is a man living who would care for anything that Canning or his friends say now?" In this interim, however, there does not appear the smallest inclination in Canning to quarrel with Lord Wellesley, on the contrary, great apparent cordiality prevails, and there is

not a doubt that Canning would be glad to accept any Cabinet office that could be opened for him.

As I mentioned to your Lordship, Lord Wellesley expects to make a triumphant case of Spain; as he laboured, and with as much success as the profligate interestedness of the Junta would admit, to procure the assemblage of the Cortes, much of what could be urged by the Foxite part of the Opposition will be neutralised; as, of course, he has taken the popular side of the question. His materials for the principal part of the parliamentary campaign, will be drawn from his own official notes, of which I have seen the opinion of Lord Bathurst to the following effect: "That they exceed all that ever appeared of the same nature, in the best periods of our former diplomacy, and that they would serve as models for that of the future."

Your Lordship knows Lord Wellesley kissed hands on Wednesday—his reception was super-gracious. The King sent for him before the levee (which is stated to me to be, on such occasions, unusual) and addressed him on the happiness his taking office afforded him, in such strong terms, as quite to overpower Lord Wellesley. Among other expressions, was that Lord Wellesley was almost the only one of his "old friends left to him." Lord Wellesley thanked the King for the Garter, when the King regretted that there were not knights enough to hold a chapter for his investiture, but that he hoped that ceremony would take place in a fortnight. The King is in high health.

What the distribution of the public press is, I have no notion, but it should seem that the present people mean to proceed on a plan opposite to a conciliatory one. There are now on foot two prosecutions against the "Morning Chronicle," two against the "Times," one against the "British Press," (Wellesley Pole to wit) one against the "Examiner," (Sunday paper) and two against Cobbett! All to come on, unless they make terms by apostatizing; of which there is no chance in the next term.

It is supposed that Guadeloupe is taken by this time, and reinforcements are immediately to be sent out to Spain. Henry Wellesley goes this day week thither. O'Brien Drury is memorialed against from every quarter connected with Indian commerce.

The letters home from Bombay, are on the whole, favourable, but there is now hardly a doubt (not of the capture) but of the foundering of the four last missing ships.

Some notices I have thrown together as to the Spanish campaign, since Sir Arthur's resuming the command, I shall take an early opportunity of sending to your Lordship.

A well deserved distinction was about to be conferred on Lord Grenville, which, while it indicated the sense of his worth which prevailed in an influential community, showed also the firmness of his hold on public opinion. To be selected as the individual most qualified to fill the important, and honourable post of the Chancellor of the University of Oxford, must be a distinction, even when conferred on the most distinguished public character; but to gain this honour, when without political interest, in opposition to a candidate supported by the vast recommendation of government patronage, implies a recognition of sterling qualifications, that renders it a dignity such as ought to have fully satisfied his ambition.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Dropmore, Dec. 10, 1809.

MY DEAREST BROTHER,

We have to-day, for the last time, made up our books; and the result is as follows, viz.:

G. [Lord Grenville] . . .	456
E. [Lord Eldon] . . .	351
B. [Duke of Beaufort] . .	216
Against, mostly E., but not accurately known whether E. or B. . . .	20
N. Including ill and abroad. . .	177
Unascertained. . . .	60
Total	1280

You see if promises hold, this state of numbers is quite decisive, and that I could afford to give E. all the against and all the unascertained, and yet beat him. A large proportion of both he will, no doubt, have; but I flatter myself scarcely enough to put the election now within the reach of accident.

This is, I really think, the rational view of the subject, though, for fear of disappointment, I hardly allow myself to indulge in it; but, on the contrary, tell myself that some unforeseen accident is yet to arise, to prevent an event which, speaking generally, does seem so improbable, as my success against the whole power of the Crown, in the hands of a man who has been eight or nine years Chancellor.

Ever, most affectionately,

G.

I suppose you have heard how I took opinions, to prove that

the poll could not be adjourned; and how the Vice-Chancellor took other opinions to show it could; and how all opinions agreed that it could not; and how, therefore, it is to continue at night.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Dropmore, Dec. 12, 1809.

My dearest Brother,

Very soon after you receive this, you will know the result of the contest at Oxford. My numbers, as you will have seen, agree almost exactly with Woolcombe's as to the three first columns, and they are more satisfactory than his, as to the two last; and in those I have much confidence in my own books, as I have had such full opportunity of keeping them correct. It is in vain to reason on any event which, when you get this, will be already past. My only fear is, not the Duke of B. giving up, which I take to be impossible, but his continuing to stand, to the effect of taking away many who would otherwise be for me; while some of those who have promised him, may (seeing his case desperate) transfer their votes to Eldon, to secure the University from the horrors of Popery.

That this will happen to a certain extent, I have no doubt; but that it will go far enough to alter the majority, I cannot persuade myself. My hopes are, therefore, very sanguine; and if I do succeed, the triumph will certainly be very great. If I fail, I trust I have philosophy enough to take it with considerable indifference, and to look only to those reasons to which you allude, for thinking the contest itself, even if unsuccessful, no light ground of exultation.

If we succeed, I need not tell you how gratifying it would be to see you here, both that I may thank you once more, and in person, for all your affectionate kindness on this as on every other occasion of my life, and also because, as I shall in the

beginning of next week, if successful, have to receive the Oxford deputation here, it would be a pride to me as well as a pleasure, that you should share in the first shows of that triumph to which you will so much have contributed.

This, however, is a little premature. I cannot count upon success in a thing so liable to the effect of accident; but the present chances are most certainly in my favour.

Ever most affectionately,

G.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Dropmore, Dec. 15, 1809.

My dearest Brother,

I understand that George set out soon after the numbers were declared last night, to bring you himself the account of our triumph. It is indeed a proud, and, considering all circumstances, a most astonishing result of a contest, in which I engaged rather because I thought I owed it to myself not to appear to acquiesce in the foolish objections raised against me, than because I thought it possible to silence the clamours of bigotry, when backed by all the influence of court and government, of law, and church.

I do not like to propose to you to take at this time of the year a useless journey, even for the short distance that separates us; and yet it would be an indescribable gratification to me, if you would assist at the reception of the deputation, who are to invest me with the office. I ask nobody else but the Bishop of Oxford, unless you can persuade the Bishop of St. Asaph to come with you, and can answer for it that the journey will not hurt him; the ceremony, I well know, will do him good. But I leave this to you to manage as you judge best; for I should be grieved indeed to expose his health to the least risk by an additional winter journey.

I do not know the day when they are to come. I will write

by Bicester, as soon as I know it, though probably you will learn it from Oxford.

Dropmore, Dec. 17, 1809.

Many thanks to you, my dearest brother, for your congratulations, which should, indeed, be mutual, for I am very sure your pleasure on this occasion has fully equalled my own. I do not, however, attempt to disguise my own gratification in this event, which is very great indeed, in every light in which I consider the subject. The rage and disappointment of my adversaries, is of itself no little proof of the importance of the triumph we have achieved.

I hear nothing of the time for the private investiture. I much wish, if I can manage it, to bring my new dignity to your festivities, and to join in your rejoicings. But I know not how far this can be made compatible with the arrangements for receiving the delegates.

I have promised to be in town, to fix there, the first week in January. Grey comes at the same time, and it is important that we should have a fortnight or three weeks to do what is to be done before the meeting.

I got last week Lord Fingall's letter, with the petition. I determined to do nothing with it till the election was over; and I shall now write only to say that in a matter of such moment, and involving so many considerations, I can say nothing till I have had the opportunity of consulting with many friends of the question, who may probably not be in town till much nearer the meeting of parliament.

There is no prospect that any efforts of opposition in parliament could do that which alone could be of real use in the present crisis—remove the present incapable ministers, and substitute in their room a government possessing both the will and the power to conciliate the mass of the people of Ireland.

Some good may, however, result from endeavouring to keep

together a body of men, like the present opposition, strong enough to give to the country the advantage of such a system, under any change of circumstances that may arise. And this, as it seems to me, will best be done by our abstaining (at least, by my abstaining,) from taking any very active part, or even habituating myself to any frequent attendance, in parliament; because such activity and attendance would, I fear, almost inevitably lead to disunion, by the necessity it would impose upon me of publicly expressing my dissent from many things, which, I fear, I could as little restrain, as I could approve them.

My present ideas point, therefore, at taking the opportunity of the first day, to express a very strong disapprobation of the system and conduct of the government, and a total distrust of their ability to bear us through this dreadful struggle. Then to declare my utter despair of any good to be done, except by the one great measure of uniting Ireland to this country, not in name, but in heart and interest. To say that if, under such circumstances, I see on any particular occasion, the prospect of doing any good, great or small, by being in my place in parliament, there I shall most certainly be as often as that motive shall seem to me to justify, or require it. But that if I am not as sanguine in that respect as others may possibly be, I hope no one will attribute my absence (whenever it may happen) to any other motive than the despair of doing good, and the unwillingness to give the House the unnecessary trouble of hearing me repeat in vain, as I must do as often as I attend, that all other modes of safety for the country are illusory, except that alone, against which the present ministers have done their utmost to pledge the King, the parliament and the country.

After this, I should, of course, attend on the Walcheren business and a few other questions, and might indulge my own invincible reluctance to the course of a daily parliamentary opposition, for which I am too old, too scrupulous, and in the present state of the country, much too timid. I have in truth

no idea that anything can save us, if Ireland is alienated, as I fear it will irrecoverably be. I have written to state these general ideas to Lord Grey.

The self-confidence and military incompetency of the Spanish generals, continued to mar all the advantages obtained by the skill of Lord Wellington and the bravery of his troops. Against such commanders as Soult, Victor, Suchet, Kellerman, they rarely had a chance. They lost battle after battle; they lost position, material, reputation, everything essential to a successful campaign. Serious as this was, it formed but a portion of the mischief; these repeated reverses, disasters, and flights, materially affected the English army, for they had left it open to an overwhelming attack by a concentration of force. Lord Wellington, therefore, had fallen back upon Portugal, and there in safety, observed the realization of his worst anticipations as to the fate of Spanish armies, led by Spanish generals. The latter had undertaken an offensive movement, in defiance of his warnings, and at Ocaña, and Alba de Tormes, obtained a liberal measure of punishment for their presumption. Such reverses added to Lord Wellington's difficulties, and the embarrassments of the government at home; for it made more distant the attainment of the object for which the war had been commenced. Matters equally unpleasant were pressing upon them; and they afforded no evidence of being able to allay the apprehensions that had been created, since the fruits of their policy had been presented to the nation, with such startling prominence.

——— TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

London, Dec. 16, 1809.

The government have been for some days past in the greatest consternation from the Spanish news. Their despatches are of the very worst nature. The Spanish advance was contrary to the express opinion and advice of Sir Arthur (Lord Wellington I mean) who stated both to the generals and to the Junta, that "they were going forward to their own destruction."

For the rest, Lord Wellington states that the Spaniards behaved as ill as it was possible—most of them running away on the very appearance of the French. All their artillery (seventy pieces) camp equipage, baggage, and even arms, for the fugitives threw them away, are lost. The road to Seville, and consequently to Cadiz, is thus opened—the loss of both must, therefore, be looked for. And what is worse, Sir Arthur must now retreat upon, if not within the frontiers of Portugal, where he will find it hard enough to sustain himself. Reinforcements, are, however, to be sent out (and are sending out) to him to the greatest possible extent.

While I was in town yesterday, news came to Lord Wellesley that the Queen was very ill, and by all that I could gather, this news seems to be as alarming to them as the other. It seems the King's anxiety about her is at the greatest height, and he can hardly be kept quiet. I take it for granted, from what I see and hear, that if anything were to happen to her, that it would be all over with him. Upon the whole, my own belief is, that the hope of existing over the Session, with these people seems hourly decreasing, and I should hardly think will ultimately admit of a struggle.

Lord Wellesley wrote to Lord Grenville on his success at Oxford, congratulating him thereon, and saying that his (Lord Wellesley's) residence at Seville, and his holding the tapers for

two hours at the high mass performed in the cathedral for the repose of Sir John Moore's soul, had much ameliorated his sentiments on the "No Popery" system. To which Lord Grenville wrote answer, which has been very gratifying to Lord Wellesley. In fact, the latter has, very much to the dissatisfaction of some of his colleagues, on all occasions publicly expressed his wishes for the success of Lord Grenville, and as far as he could, promoted it. His own private secretary, Vaughan, voted for Lord Grenville, as did an under-secretary of the Treasury, whose name I forget. On the whole, that event has been received by the public with the greatest joy and exultation; by the government (who seem to me, indeed, to be on every question divided from it) with dismay and apprehension. When I speak of Ministers, I always except Lords Wellesley and Bathurst, who have openly manifested their wishes for Lord Grenville. And here I hope I may be allowed to say, no person out of your Lordship's family, has been more rejoiced than myself at what has taken place.

On the conduct of Canning, I am sure there can be but one opinion. The opinion of Lord Wellesley thereon, he is no stranger to.

MR. T. GRENVILLE TO EARL TEMPLE.

Cleveland Square, Dec. 23, 1809.

MY DEAR TEMPLE,

In the election for an East India Director, Lord St. Vincent is very earnest for the success of Mr. Taylor. The Soanes, who are Bank architects, as he is told, could be obtained by your solicitation for Mr. Taylor. Exclusive of my general desire to assist Lord St. Vincent's wishes, his eager canvass for us in the Oxford election, entitles him to any electioneering service which we can render him. I have therefore undertaken to solicit you to solicit the Messrs. Soanes in behalf of Mr. Taylor. Pray have the

goodness either to write to Lord St. Vincent himself, or to send me any answer which I can enclose to him.

The reports of Canning joining Wellesley increase every day; and people are so determined to believe it, that they are ready to believe in Eldon's resigning the Seals, and Perceval taking them, in order to make a Premier of Lord Wellesley, and a Secretary of State of Canning. They mix up with this the resignation of Camden, and the out-turn of Mulgrave, in order to enrich the dose which the public credulity is called upon to swallow. I believe no other of these things except Wellesley's desire to persuade Canning, and Canning's amiable disposition to all such gentle violences. His diplomatic success in his foreign appointments has been as happily exemplified in America as it was in Spain.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Dropmore, Dec. 27, 1809.

My dearest Brother,

The investiture of my new dignities is finally fixed for the 10th of January in town. I have delayed it so long, in order to give my dear friend, the Vice-Chancellor, the opportunity of attending, which he expressed a wish to do; and I really hope all would go on well for conciliation and good humour, if I could silence the ribaldry of the 'Morning Chronicle;' but it has been my fate, all through life, to be more injured by the press in my favour, than by that which has been pretty unsparingly employed against me.

The deputation consists of eighteen persons, and Lady Grenville undertakes to find dining-room and table-room for no more than twenty-four.

I think of asking Lord Stafford, Bishop of London, Bishop of Oxford, Chief Baron, and Lord Auckland; but before I send the cards, I wish to know whether there is any possibility of your being in town for that day, as in that case I should, of

course, omit the last upon my list, and should, I need not say, have much more pleasure in seeing you filling his chair, and enjoying the triumph, as much as I am sure you would. But I have not the conscience to ask you to come (merely for that ceremony) a winter journey of 120 miles.

There are, however, other objects of far more importance than any ceremony, and upon which I greatly want your assistance and advice. I have written to Lord Fingall, to tell him that I can give him no answer about his petition till much nearer the opening of the Session. The nature of that answer must, therefore, be the object of immediate consultation and decision. For this purpose, among others, I had hoped to have come to Stowe this very day; but Grey writes me word, that he is to be in town by Monday or Tuesday next. I have so long urged his coming, and promised to meet him there, when he does come, that I cannot now disappoint him; and the interval is hardly sufficient for packing up my papers, doing fifty little businesses, that the canvass and election have wholly suspended; and preparing myself for the winter's campaign.

I am preparing for consideration a long letter to Lord Fingall; (meant to be printed, if it is adopted at all), in which, according to my present ideas, I shall offer as a mere matter of form to present their petition, if they still wish that I should do this, after being apprised that I do not mean to ground any motion upon it, a decision which I then proceed to explain at considerable length.

This is, however, only meant as a canvass for working upon, and as a clearer mode of explaining my present ideas to those who are to be consulted. The answer, whatever it may be, must clearly be given, not as the expression of any individual opinion, but in the name of the large body of the steady and determined friends to the measure itself.

I need not say on how many grounds I most ardently wish to have your assistance in this whole business, one of the most

delicate in its nature, and most important in its consequences, that can form the subject of party, or political deliberation.

If you can give me this advantage by coming to town by the 10th, either to fix there or to return, that is of course, what I should most wish; but somehow or other, your advice I must have both as to the general purport, and the particular wording of this paper, which is as yet in embryo, a part of it only begun upon, and that in a very rough sketch, requiring, as is my habit of composition, a great deal of subsequent correction and retrenchment.

Pray let me know what you say to all this, and if possible *ipse veni.*

But love to all your circle, and particularly to the gentleman of age.*

I have proposed to Tom, that you and he should authorize me to present to Hodson, a copy of the L. P. Adelphi Homer, and he only waits your sanction to give orders accordingly for preparing one in splendid binding. God knows whether I may ever have the means of offering to Hodson any more solid testimony of gratitude, and this would at least prove the sense I have of his kindness, though it is but a poor return for it. I trust, therefore, you will have no objection to this mode of acknowledging what I am sure you feel as a debt of gratitude due from you as well as from myself.

The principal ministerial changes about this period were, on the 14th of October, Henry, Earl Bathurst, was sworn one of his Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State, and on the 29th, the Right Hon. Henry John Viscount Palmerston, was appointed Secretary at War, *vice* Lord Granville Leveson Gower, resigned. On Nov. 1, Right

* George Grenville, subsequently Lord Nugent.

Hon. Richard Ryder was sworn one of his Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State; on the 7th, the Right Hon. Robert Dundas was appointed First Commissioner for the management of Affairs in India; on the 14th, Lord Lowther succeeded Lord Palmerston as one of the Lords of the Admiralty; on Dec. 6th, the Marquis Wellesley was sworn one of the Principal Secretaries of State, and on the 15th, his brother Henry succeeded him as Envoy Extraordinary in Spain.

The intelligence of Lord Wellington's retreat into Portugal, attended with very heavy loss, increased the uneasy feelings excited by that of the Walcheren disasters, and for a considerable period lessened the public confidence in that distinguished commander. Hence arose the disinclination subsequently exhibited by many of the Whigs who had been numbered among his warmest friends, to reduce the number of troops disposable for the defence of England in case of invasion, which seemed imminent, for the purpose of augmenting the army under his command, that to all appearance was incapable of realizing any decided advantage. The apparently desperate character of our position, did not escape the notice of the imperial contributor to the government newspaper in Paris, who after exaggerating our losses, proposed the title of "Duke of Walcheren" for Lord Chatham, as equally appropriate as that of Viscount Wellington for Sir Arthur Wellesley. In a letter written by him, about the same time, to his temporary friend and ally the Emperor of Russia, he dwells exultingly on the quarrels in the English government, and the result of their expeditions in Walcheren and Spain,

announcing that they were also on the point of greatly increasing their embarrassments by forcing the Americans to a declaration of war; to which he might have added, that this was a consummation he had not only devoutly wished, but had been long urgently striving to secure. It had been the grand object of his Berlin and Milan fulminations, against British shipping, and of his innumerable coaxings and caressings of the representatives of the United States.

In his opening address to the Legislative Body on the 4th of December, Napoleon was more than usually grandiloquent upon his own proud position; more than usually contemptuons on that of his sturdy antagonist. "When I shall shew myself beyond the Pyrenees," his Imperial Majesty assured the deputies, "the frightened leopard will fly to the ocean, to avoid shame, defeat, and death." Possibly the Emperor became so engrossed by his repudiation of his amiable Empress Josephine, to allow of his union with a daughter of the Imperial house of Austria, which quickly followed, that he was unable to make the meditated journey. The "leopard," better known as our old friend, the British Lion, was not in the least frightened, and did not fly; the army of Lord Wellington subsequently retreated to the lines of Torres Vedras, and was then in perfect security against any attack.

1810.

COMMITTEE OF INQUIRY INTO THE WALCHEREN EXPEDITION—LORD WELLINGTON IN SPAIN—MINISTERIAL INTRIGUES—STATE OF OPPOSITION—SECRET COMMUNICATIONS—RETURN OF THE KING'S MALADY—THE PRINCE OF WALES PROPOSED AS REGENT—DEBATES IN PARLIAMENT.

THE state of parties at the opening of the Session, is to some extent indicated in the following communications. The ostensible leader of the House of Commons was Mr. George Ponsonby, but by many he was tolerated as such, rather than acknowledged, and though he made strenuous efforts to maintain his authority, there was a section of the opposition, which included Whitbread, Lord Folkestone, and Sir Francis Burdett, that insisted on independence. What the Grenvilles thought of him has already appeared. As however, it was of the first importance, towards the advancement of a common policy, that an intimate union should exist among the opponents of government, the wisest amongst them counselled submission. An attack was to be made upon that prominent ministerial failure, the expedition to the Scheldt, and although it might have been thought that parliament had had quite enough of

impeachments, it was generally believed that the same machinery would be employed upon the present victims of popular censure.

The impression this sad affair had left upon the public mind, may be gathered from the first division in the House of Commons that had reference to it. The speech from the throne, which was unusually long, contained a reference to the expedition, alluding to "advantages" arising from it, and papers containing "satisfactory information" on the subject. This appeared to be a challenge to the opposition, which was promptly accepted by Lord St. Vincent and Lord Grenville. The former after some severe reflections upon the Convention of Cintra, and the failure at Walcheren, said it was high time parliament should adopt measures adequate to the present alarming crisis of affairs, or else the voice of the people would resound like thunder in their ears. He concluded by stating, that when he considered the state of the government, he was quite at a loss to characterize it. The Ministers popped in and popped out like the man and woman in the peasant's barometer; they changed situations, and shuffled about; they rose up like tadpoles, they assumed all sorts of shapes; sometimes that of wasps, then of hornets, and sometimes that of beasts, devouring and devastating the country.*

This was anything but flattering; Lord Grenville however followed in a still bolder strain, exposing the folly of all the military demonstrations of the government, and concluding with an amendment to the address, reflecting

* See Debates.

upon their waste of the resources of the country, and suggesting a rigid enquiry. It was seconded by Earl Moira, and supported by Lord Carysfort, but on the division, Ministers had a majority of fifty.

In the House of Commons on the same day, January 23rd, Lord Gower proposed a similar amendment to the address, which was supported by George Ponsonby, Whitbread, Tierney, and other members of Opposition; the government being defended by Lord Castlereagh, Canning, and Perceval. The division showed a majority for Ministers of ninety-six. Other divisions followed, but the government maintained a majority till the 26th, when Lord Porchester, on moving a committee of the whole House to inquire into the conduct and policy of the late expedition to the Scheldt, after a long and animated debate, in which Ponsonby, Tierney, Wyndham, Wilberforce, and Sir Samuel Romilly, supported the motion, and Croker, the new Secretary to the Admiralty, Perceval and Canning opposed, Ministers found themselves in a minority of nine. The effect of this triumph was soon felt by the government, the leading members of which, became involuntary spectators of the exposure of their mischievous blunders.

The government were in a very insecure position—they held together by that peculiar ministerial instinct that has been found to sustain similar communities under still more damaging attacks. Court favour did much to keep them in their places, but the reluctance of the Grenville party to supersede them, did more. For the latter, there was no prospect of stability with the certain opposition of the Crown; and under such circumstances there is no doubt

that they exercised a sound discretion in keeping out of office.

MR. T. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Cleveland Square, Jan. 10, 1810.

My dearest Brother,

I had yesterday a visit from Lord Harberton (Pomeroy,) who came by his own desire to see my books, and afterwards sent me a present of an early and rare edition of Braudt's Nef des Fols; he accompanied this with a letter full of expressions of Grenville attachment and regard, and specially desired that you might be told how mindful he continued to be, of the signal mark of favour which he had received from you during your Lord-Lieutenantcy in Ireland, "at a time that it was most wanted, and most truly acceptable to him." I suppose this is intelligible to you, and as it shews a grateful recollection, cannot but be agreeable to you.

I was accidentally looking over Huddesford's Catalogue of A. Wood's MSS. in the Ashmole Museum, where I find "The Case of the Dispensation of Sir John Arundel to marry Katharine Grenville;" pray tell me what case this is, and what family history is contained in it. The Catalogue printed at Oxford in 1761, 8vo, describes also among the MSS., "accounts of Grenville arms, of Missender Abbey, and various parts of Buckinghamshire Topography;" do you know if these have ever been examined? and would it not be worth while to have them examined, and copied for your collection?

William is in the agony of composing his features into a becoming state of modest gravity, to hear a reply to the Latin praises of the Oxford orator. What his Latin speech to the orator may be, remains to be heard; of his English speeches that learned critic, Dog Dent, does not seem to think highly, for he remarked to Tierney that it was a great thing for Opposi-

tion to have got Lord H. Petty up to the House of Lords, as it would now become hard work for Lord Hawkesbury. We have had a rich mess of perplexity from a supposed intention of G. Ponsonby to resign his sceptre in the House of Commons; he has suddenly sprung up in Arlington Street, with his sceptre in his hands, which he is ready to lay across the shoulders of any man who shall withhold all due allegiance.

The spirit of mutiny has to some degree extended from the ranks of the Sepoys at Madras, to those of the patriots at St. Stephen's; we are trying to pacify these domestic disquietudes, not from supposing that Ponsonby's continuing will remove all difficulties, but from believing that upon the whole, there will be less difficulty with him than without him; and a choice of evils is all that is left, in any matter that regards the public interests. I am a great desponder, but I rejoice to be told that you will come and despond with us in a day or two, by word of mouth, as no paper would be large enough to contain my list of desperate apprehensions. We are treating with America, which not to do would be madness; we are reinforcing and defending Portugal, which to do is madness.

MR. T. GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Cleveland Square, Jan. 16, 1810.

My dearest Brother,

I am much gratified in finding, both by your letter, and by that of your son, how much I had consulted what was agreeable to you both in not delaying the renewal of the proposal which I had once before made to you. As I think the earliest moment is always the best, I have written to Mr. Perceval for the Chiltern Hundreds, so that, if his answer is affirmative, Lord Temple may, without impropriety, move for a new writ on the first day of the Session, and George may be elected soon after.

I am, however, disappointed at not seeing you in town as

early as I had hoped, and still more vehemently do I protest against your languid quotations of age, and disability, and retirement, and the like. Fifty-six years of age may form a reasonable as well as legal ground of exemption from military service, but your mind and talents are fresh and vigorous, and though neither you nor I could stand the fatigues of such a Session as the last in the House of Commons, there is too much serviceable stuff in you to lie down with upon your pillow, and there is too little hope of quiet or prosperity in the country, to justify either you or me in going to sleep when we ought to be upon duty at our posts.

The politicians dined with me yesterday, and it is agreed that either Lord Grey or Lord Grenville will move the amendment in the House of Lords; which you will probably think with me is the best arrangement, considering the rich fund of opposition which in either case will remain for reply. Lord Grenville has finished his sketch of a letter to Lord Fingall, which Lord Grey, Lord Lansdowne, Tierney, and myself, most entirely approve; at the same time, you ought to know that the Duke of Bedford, Lord Holland, Lord Fitzwilliam, Elliot, and Whitbread, are all decidedly of opinion against our laying any stress upon the veto, and this difference of opinion will be probably found such as cannot easily be compromised. By the bye, what a precious rascal your Dr. Milner has shown himself. I suppose you have read in Temple's last Cobbett, Milner's letter, signed J. M., and dated Winchester, which ends in these words, "Let the promoters of emancipation refrain from those useless teazing measures, the mixed produce of bigotry and liberality, which will have no other effect than to make the Irish hesitate about a choice of evils, betwen No Popery and the Talents, and to render their discontent greater than ever." What a dog!

G. Villiers is blown up—the deficit of his marine account to 1804, is £240,000. I know this, but you must not name it till you hear it elsewhere.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Camelford House, Jan. 27, 1810.

My dearest Brother,

You will have seen the accounts of the triumph to me, very unexpected, of last night. It will not, at least, in its immediate effect, overturn the government; and if it did, who can tell what further consequences would arise? You love me, I am sure too well, to wish to see me embarked in such a project as that, of carrying on a government in these times, with a court influence actively exerted, as before, to undermine me.

MR W. H. FREMANTLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Stanhope Street, Jan. 29, 1810.

My dear Lord,

I did not send you an account of our triumphant division, because I knew Lord Temple meant to write to you. You may easily imagine the effect it has had, and the general opinion, even among the most strenuous supporters of the government, is, that they must go; but, notwithstanding, you may be assured they will still hang to their places, and I hear they mean to try the question on Friday, as to the examining evidence at the bar. In this they will be defeated; and when once an examination commences, it appears quite impossible that they can maintain themselves.

Lord Chatham is frightened out of his senses at the thoughts of appearing to answer at the bar; and I know there are some of those who acted under him, who are most eager to give their opinions. Canning has lost himself, to the greatest degree, by the line he took on Friday; and Castlereagh, on the contrary, has gained great credit. It is a most anxious object now, to get our fullest attendance for the next fortnight or three weeks, as the

nail must be driven without intermission. They were quite surprised at the division, which you may well imagine, as Arbuthnot betted me a guinea, the moment they were going into the lobby to divide, that they had a majority of fifty.

There will be no division to-night on Wellington's thanks if it can be prevented. Whitbread is endeavouring to prevent it, but Folkestone, I hear, is stubborn. Of course I shall vote in favour of it, as I am sure, if it was not consistent with my own feelings, you would never approve of as negative to such a vote.

Lord Temple is gone out of town for a day. This success has united all our party most completely, and we are now acting in the greatest harmony and zeal. Ponsonby has distinguished himself most particularly; his speech on Friday was the best he ever made, both in taste and delivery.

Perceval every day displays more unfitness and mismanagement; nothing could be so completely wanting in common sense and judgment, than the course he took on Friday. I will certainly let you know when anything occurs worth writing to you about.

W. H. F.

No account whatever of poor Eden. Lord Grenville's letter to Lord Fingall is universally approved of by all parties, it is admirably timed.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Camelford House, Jan. 30, 1810.

My dearest Brother,

I am sure you do not think from my not writing to you yesterday that the subject of your last letter to me was out of my thoughts. In truth, I was desirous of once more consulting my pillow upon it. Nor have I yet been able to come to any conclusion upon it at all satisfactory to myself.

It would be too long, unless it were absolutely necessary, to attempt to detail to you all that occurs to me upon the various parts of your project; and let me first say:

1. With respect to others, it seems invidious to them, and not desirable to yourself to rest your own decision on what other people may or may not do.

2. It is generally felt that you, Lord Camden, and Lord Arden, stand in a different situation in that respect from all other cases, as enjoying advantages of this description so far exceeding by their eventual amount all reasonable calculation of what the original grant was intended to confer, or what can fall even under the most extended ideas of compensation, or reward for public services.

The claim of right is indisputable; but if you yourself think it proper to waive this by your own act to any extent you may think fit, you will surely only lessen the grace and dignity of that act, by attaching it upon other cases, which will not be generally considered as standing on similar principles.

3. The application of what you may relinquish should certainly be to the current service of the year, and not to the sinking fund for reduction of public debts, which is perhaps already, or certainly will soon become larger than is convenient, in proportion to the means and sacrifices of the country. Such an application would be a boon to the stockholders only, and no relief to the general taxable fund of the country—that which undoubtedly most requires relief: of the amount you only can judge.

But were your measure in all other respects settled to your own satisfaction, as to what you will think necessary and expedient, in a case where both are to be taken into consideration, there would still be many details to be settled as to the mode of execution, the time, &c.

On all these, it is impossible to write. It is only in conversation that such things can be adjusted; and I earnestly hope that for this, as for every reason, you will not longer delay your

coming to town. I am sure the mere circumstance of being in town is always good for you, both in health and spirits.

You will see that my Irish friends are wilder than the winds, and much more mischievous. All the evil in the present moment has been set in motion by that foolish meddling fellow, Sir J. H ****, whose private letters (as if there was common sense in writing private letters on such subjects to such men), both Troy and Milner have communicated without reserve, in order to screen themselves.

About this time, much feverish excitement having again appeared in Ireland. Lord Grenville wrote, and published, as preceding letters have intimated, a powerful appeal to those who were most forward in endeavouring to increase it, in the form of a letter to Lord Fingall, which produced a most beneficial effect, as will appear by the letter of a Right Reverend Prelate.

THE BISHOP OF LIMERICK TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Dublin, Feb. 9, 1810.

My dear Lord,

Lord Grenville's letter to Lord Fingall has, as you may suppose, occasioned a vast sensation in this country; and I sincerely congratulate your Lordship and the empire, upon its general and happy effect.

The upper orders, and all the moderate men of the Catholic body, readily accede to Lord Grenville's doctrine; but I understand Keogh's party, whom I need not describe to your Lordship, are violently bent upon opposition. They have held daily meetings for the last week, and have resolved "to pass by Lord Grenville, and offer their petition to Lord Grey—should he decline any proposition, then to Lord Moira, &c., &c."

I have the truest satisfaction in observing that Lord Gren-

ville's admirable letter has effectually quieted the Protestant claims, and the general voice of the country is now for a change of Ministers. I pray God that the same feelings may operate in the royal breast, and give the empire a chance of being rescued from the difficulties and dangers that surround it.

I am, this moment, upon my return to Limerick, after passing ten days here, upon our ecclesiastical boards. I could yesterday perceive at the Castle strong symptoms of expected change.

Lord Ely has quarrelled with the Lord-Lieutenant, being refused Elphin for his brother, from Killaloe. The Duke has promised French from Waterford. Elphin is supposed to be dying, but may yet outlive the present administration.

There is to be a meeting of the Catholics in Limerick on Thursday; I wish to be there in time to talk with some of the heads. I trust they will not be prevailed upon to unite with Keogh's party.

I have the honour to be, most faithfully,
Your Lordship's &c., &c.,
CHAS. LIMERICK.

The House of Commons resolved itself into a committee early in February, and the Walcheren inquiry commenced with the examination of the officers naval, military, and medical, who had been employed in the expedition. The Earl of Chatham, and Sir R. Strachan, published narratives with the object of exculpating themselves, but the inquiry threatened to be a very protracted affair, and the government were accused of prolonging it, for the purpose of delaying the anticipated censure. On the 22nd of February, Mr. Whitbread moved an address to the King, respecting papers alleged to have been presented

to his Majesty by Lord Chatham, which after a sharp debate, was carried against Ministers by a majority of seven.

The inquiry proceeded, giving opportunities for innumerable attacks on the position of government; but there was always a stout defence. No matter how numerous the assailants, or how violent the assault, the government found a resolute champion ready to dispute every inch of ground. The object of the much abused enterprise was declared to be worthy of a great nation, and well deserving all the expense that had been lavished in its preparation—the destruction of a naval depot, which Napoleon had been creating with consummate care, as an additional means of assailing England, was described as a project that ought to have been eagerly entertained by any ministry anxious for the welfare, for the safety of the country, committed to their charge. The incalculable advantages that Austria might have derived from a diversion in her favour, that crippled the resources of her powerful enemy, and drew off a part of the force with which she was assailed, were insisted upon. In short, all that could be said in favour of the expedition, was said, and said well, and all that could have been raised on the other side of the question, as carefully and cleverly omitted.

It may be asked who was the chivalrous orator who thus gallantly threw himself into the ministerial trenches, when the position was on the point of being carried by a vigorous movement of the attacking force? Who stood in the practicable breach and single handed, kept back the eager assailants rushing forward to drive the garrison out of the

citadel? Strange to say, this was the colleague whom they had desired to expel, and had attempted to disgrace. Ministers were indebted to Lord Castlereagh for the spirited and skilful defence that baffled the most vigorous attacks of Opposition. It realized the most perfect idea of justice, that the coterie of statesmen who had proclaimed among themselves the unfitness of Lord Castlereagh to associate with them in a joint labour, should subsequently owe their position, their power, and their reputation, to the influence of his superior talent and eloquence.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Camelford House, Feb. 24, 1810.

My dearest Brother,

It will be necessary to vacate your proxy before Friday, as the Duke of Gloucester wishes not to attend the motion upon the King's answer to the City about the Walcheren expedition. He has an idea that it may be considered as personal to the King. I do not think there is much in this, but I have always advised him to avoid every step that could by possibility bear such an interpretation. I do not send you a fresh proxy, because I hope you will be here yourself, but if that should be out of the question, let me know it, and I will send you one down. He has particularly desired that after this question it should be re-entered to him, should there be any occasion for continuing a proxy at all.

I say nothing to you of our victory last night, as you will hear all the particulars from others. It will I take it, be worse received at Windsor than any event that has happened this many a day. People are asking this morning whether Perceval will not resign upon it. But I think it is clear that he must

stay in for his own safety, till the inquiry is over. Enough has been already proved to make it necessary for him and his colleagues to retain all the support which Ministerial situation can give, and even so, I much doubt whether they can shelter themselves from censure. Lord Chatham's situation seems quite desperate. He has got into a scrape, from which I don't see how it is possible for him to extricate himself.

Ever most affectionately yours.

G.

The changes in the government made imperative by the position in which it had placed itself, are carefully detailed, evidently from good authority, in the ensuing communications, which unveil the whole of the ministerial manœuvres going on at this period. The Walcheren inquiry, however, came to an unexpected termination; and, chiefly through the spirited defence of Lord Castlereagh, Ministers succeeded in escaping scatheless. So great a success afforded them courage at first to decline the assistance they had been seeking immediately before; but mutual jealousies soon began to display themselves, and a fresh crop of intrigues was preparing the way for a new combination.

——— TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

March 26, 1810.

Having the means of sending these lines to your Lordship by a perfectly safe hand, I write, as I think in this agitated moment, the subject may not be uninteresting or useless.

The debate of to-night, will, it is expected by the government, be an adjourned one, and probably last for three nights—certainly for two. The result will be, they imagine, as I have once before stated to your Lordship, fatal to the existing ad-

ministration, on the point of the retention of Walcheren. Upon those resolutions which turn on the undertaking the expedition, and the measures actually put in effect, they may have small majorities, but I repeat, the result of the whole will be fatal to the existing government, with the exception of Lord Wellesley, and perhaps Lord Harrowby. A new one must, therefore, be formed. Whatever may have happened to have occasioned it, I cannot tell; but in the present moment, the Wellesleys are satisfied, Lord Wellesley will have the King's commands to that effect; and what is more, they are equally confident of forming one which shall be permanent. Of the co-operation of the Doctor, they have no doubt, and my lights lead me to see that all is arranged already on that head. Already is Lord Ellenborough's powerful assistance in the House of Lords calculated upon, "who, however, will not be in the Cabinet, his being there in the late administration being solely owing to Lord Sidmouth's having no other friend in it, who, consequently forced it; but now, being an united Cabinet, there will be no such necessity! Lord Buckinghamshire is an old friend and a most honourable man. Bathurst very respectable and useful. Vansittart an able financier, &c., &c."

In this projected government, Lord Eldon is not to be touched, nor Lord Melville to be taken in. The proscription of Walcheren will not attach to the former, as being solely the head of the law, and the latter has shown such a defalcation in intellect and capacity, as to be considered a burthen, rather than an acquisition to whatever party he may be attached, and in point of parliamentary assistance, that party would lose as many votes as he could bring, from his unpopularity, &c., &c.

Yorke, of course, will come forward prominently. Nor are the doors absolutely shut by the course which parliamentary indignation will take, as it is supposed, upon Canning and Castlereagh. For recurring for a moment to what I have already stated, they will have the full benefit of the acquittal on the two

first points of the censure. Nor can they be included in the conviction (if I may so call it) on the last, being both out of office before the period when the retention of Walcheren becomes culpable. The leanings of Lord Wellesley are all towards Castlereagh. There exists between them at present the most perfect understanding—a knot which is drawn closer by the agency of one of the Seymours (Lord George, I believe), who is a brother commissioner, and great friend of Mr. Sydenham's, and who is Lord Castlereagh's uncle, and prime agent in this affair. The great difficulty would arise in taking both these personages into the same Cabinet after what has passed, aggravated by Cooke's next-to-avowed pamphlet, entitled "An Answer to the Quarterly Review, &c.," published by Stockdale, in Pall-Mall, and which, if your Lordship have not read, I request you will; and which, coupled with the information I already gave your Lordship respecting his conduct with regard to Lord Wellesley, shows this gentleman's double intrigue in an integral and entire point of view. But even this difficulty may be got over. "Canning only objected to the conduct of the war, and Lord Castlereagh will not conduct it." And again, "Lord Castlereagh would not for his private resentments break up a plan in which so many of his friends will be mixed, and in which he is treated with so much consideration."

Ireland will not be disturbed. The Duke of Richmond has the greatest friendship for Lord Wellesley; and so far from his resenting the giving the latter the Garter, it is quite the reverse; for when there was question of giving it to the Duke of Newcastle, the Duke of Richmond objected his claims for the next, which he would waive in no case, but that of the Marquis Wellesley. I should not be surprised if all this go on, should Lord Powis come into the Cabinet, but without office; and I think they will, to gratify the Duke of Richmond, make him the [Duke] Commander-in-Chief, in Ireland. It has been (I am confident) put to the Duke of York, whether, if an exertion

were made to restore him, he would accept of his *quondam* situation; but he has positively declined any alteration in his present retirement.

Your Lordship will see in all this that the sacrifice is Perceval, who gets nothing, nor can get anything. He is now equally blamed for not giving himself the Tellership, by those who certainly foresaw a fate which they themselves have so much contributed to, when the vacancy occurred; but which he positively refused to do, and gave it to Yorke, who will now raise himself on the ruin of the former.

To return for a moment to the Doctor, it is now asserted that he is in the highest favour with the King, that he has a considerable following in parliament, and great popularity in the country. In short, that if Lord Wellesley do not form the new administration, that he, the Doctor, will. Whether, in the latter case, Lord Wellesley would hold his present office, I cannot tell, but I incline to think he would.

April 2, 1810.

The unexpected result of the Walcheren expedition inquiry, has been to the full as surprising and mortifying to the Wellesleys, as to the public. The causes of the ministerial majority is not attributed, as far as I can learn, to any peculiar exertion on the part of government, but sheerly to their having the better of the argument—their opponents (particularly Whitbread) not with all their advantages, having made their case out. Canning's speech I understand, and Perceval's general reply, were consummately great. This triumph, however, although in its very nature it affects the relative and positive situation of administration considerably, is not so decisive on it, generally, as to supervene the necessity of a change, at least, so far as to strengthen themselves, as far as circumstances will admit.

The Doctor, therefore, and his friends, are still included in this corroborant scheme; but how it is to be arranged, it is

not so easily to be decided, even among the parties themselves. In the first place, important difficulties arise from a circumstance of very recent date, and which your Lordship may depend on: to the surprise of all Lord Wellesley's friends, a complete reconciliation has taken place, within this last week, between him and Canning. Whether this was effected by the latter in the way of submission, or satisfactory explanation of all your Lordship is already acquainted with, I am to learn—but the fact is certain—hence, Lord Wellesley insists, that in any change, Canning must have a fair offer of situation, or he himself, (Lord Wellesley) will go out. This is due, saith Lord Wellesley, to Canning, for all the efforts of the latter to procure situation for Lord Wellesley last summer—it always to be remembered that Canning's personal intrigue goes for nothing, it being, as I have already said, explained away, or apologized for.

This chivalry on the part of Lord Wellesley is very little to the taste of his nearest friends, who as little approve the proposed sacrifice, as the reconciliation with Canning—particularly since the Christian patience with which the latter has borne the gross personalities poured upon him by Ponsonby, Whitbread, and Tierney, in the course of the Walcheren debate, and which they say no man of honour could bear, at least from the two latter—Ponsonby's character being well-known as decidedly averse from the last appeal.

Supposing Lord Wellesley and Canning thus *hors de combat*, the field is left clear (subject, however, to the hostility of a new party to be scrambled together by these personages) to Perceval, Lord Sidmouth, Castlereagh, Yorke, &c. But here again are difficulties. Perceval will hardly put the Doctor into his shoes, and the latter with Castlereagh, openly declare they will not take office under Perceval—the former for reasons your Lordship is well aware of, the latter on account of the misprision of the Canning treason against him—Lord Castlereagh,

This is, I really think, the state of things in the present moment. Your Lordship knows better than any body whether it be reasonable and consistent in all its parts as I put it. It is, indeed, but the outline, to fill up which is impossible within the limits to which I am prescribed. You will also see there is one proposed way of determining these difficulties, to which it is strongly hoped that all concerned in this "give and take plate," will accede; namely, the putting Lord Wellesley at the head of the government, when the hunger for place, competitorship and pretentions may all, by falling in under his banners, be adjusted and satisfied, and thus a strong, consistent, and united government be formed. On all hands, it seems settled that opposition are placed at an immeasurable distance from office, by this late unexpected majority, and that the King's death alone can terminate this exclusion.

It is, I find, determined that Burdett is to be sent to the Tower. Perceval was eager that it should be done on Wednesday night last, and in contemplation thereof, all the guards, and every armed body which government could command on the spot, were in readiness to suppress tumult, &c., &c.

Hunt (of Ordnance celebrity) is to be expelled, which Perceval is to move. R. Wellesley succeeds him at Hythe.

If the new government be formed on either of the cases to which I have alluded, Lord Minto will be called home from India as will Sir J. Barlow.

Your Lordship sees that much of that acerbity to which I alluded, and deprecated in my last letter to your Lordship before you left the country, took place in the House of Lords on Friday night last. The result of that debate is considered as another battle of Talavera by the Wellesleys, and they have been congratulated upon Lord Wellesley's speech and its effect, in a manner sufficiently flattering not to make them vain, and this from quarters which would surprise your Lordship. This bitterness, however, which the most diabolical

efforts have been made use of to aggravate and heighten, has taken a soberer complexion than was at first to be apprehended. It will now only show itself in debate. And even of that determination, one of the parties will, if he have not already, receive a communication through the common friend and old schoolfellow of both, Moss, the Bishop of Oxford.

Camberwell, April 25, 1810.

Severe fits of illness have so much interfered with the fettered opportunities my circumstances afford of hearing anything which might interest your Lordship, that I have forborne troubling you for some time back; accident, however, threw me in the way of my friend yesterday, whose conversation upon the whole, gave me some desirable information. In the first place, Lord Mulgrave goes to the Ordnance, with the consent of all parties, for his navy administration has been at once wrong-headed, impracticable, and inefficient; his successor at the Admiralty is Charles Yorke, as might be expected. One might suppose, considering the late negative successes of administration, that with this stiffening, all would go on smoothly, at least within themselves. Not so, however—at least so far as I can gather. If your Lordship recur to the matter of my two last letters, you will see that the scheme of a new administration, of which Lord Wellesley was to be the head, and which was to embrace every division of politicians that are not attached to Lord Grenville, was too nearly matured not to be calculated upon with sanguineness, or to be relinquished without mortification, by those who were most to be benefitted by the projected change. The Walcheren acquittal, however, has completely frustrated, for the present, this hopeful scheme, and has left triumph perhaps for Perceval, but mortification to whoever was concerned in it beside. Hence an ill-blood and rancour between the late allies, which must

terminate in rupture, deferred perhaps, till the end of the Session, but which must, in my opinion, inevitably ensue.

If it be asked where will the ostensible grounds of separation among those be found, who remain in *statu quo*, with respect to each other, and to their opponents? The answer will be as follows: Before the result of the late inquiry, and pending it, it was laid down as a principle by Lord Wellesley, and in the then state of things, acceded to by the other members of the government, that they were too weak to go on, and that they must strengthen their hands by every possible means, and in every event. Hence arose negotiations with the Doctor, Castlereagh, and Canning—very little it is to be presumed to the taste of Mr. Perceval, who accordingly, when the very unexpected result took place, quickly found out, and now maintains his opinion, that with the addition of Mr. Yorke, the government is quite strong enough, and in every case will not treat with the Doctor, after the vote he gave on the Walcheren business. On the other hand, Lord Wellesley does not think it strong enough constituted as it now is, even with Mr. Yorke (or in other words, that no administration that can be found, will be so, of which he is not the head) and intends to make it weaker, by resignation at the end of the Session. Should this take place, your Lordship will see a triple alliance between Lord Wellesley, the Doctor, and Canning, to which, if they can, they will add Castlereagh; but the temptation to take the latter in will be too great, not to induce Perceval to make him offers, which he would prefer to anything the malcontents could afford him. Besides that, he always prefers possession to speculation.

At the moment in which I write, the confederacy to which I allude is organising. The Doctor is hourly consulted, as is Canning, with whom the reconciliation is so perfect, that Lord Wellesley has declared, that should any offer be made to any other person, without a fair proposition to Canning, to include the latter, he, Lord Wellesley, will resign. In the meantime,

the Doctor, " although not of the very first rate talents, has great weight in the country, a considerable following in parliament, able adherents, and would be a most valuable second in any administration." *Tempora mutantur*, &c., &c. Of the minor, or, rather, more secret causes of dissatisfaction among these gentry, on the part of Perceval, is his consciousness, that had he been out-voted, or nearly out-voted, his *sacré* was quite prepared, his funeral procession marshalled out, and his possessions as quietly distributed among his self-appointed executors, as if he were actually dead and buried. He is already, however, making some of them pointedly feel his resuscitation. No longer does he evince the slightest deference to Lord Wellesley on any point; on the contrary, in the course of the week before last, in a matter connected with the interests of the French King and Princes (the details of which I do not state, as I presume your Lordship must be well acquainted with them) where Lord Wellesley thought the honour and dignity of the country concerned, he met with such opposition from the Treasury, that it came to a downright quarrel, which, had not a compromise taken place, would have instantly produced the resignation I before mentioned. For the rest, Lord Wellesley complains that he has no weight whatever in council—that there is nothing doing there which marks energy or activity—that the affairs of the country are quite at a stand-still, and are likely to remain so; and that so little is his private interest in any of the departments, that since his accession to office he has not been able to make an exciseman. This is more particularly *à moi*. Add to all this, that he hates, despises, and is out of friendship, or even intimacy with every one of his colleagues at this moment. Such is the public picture of Lord Wellesley—his private can scarcely be filled up with anything more comfortable.

Such is the melancholy career of a man of the greatest abilities, and, I firmly believe, of a tender and sensible heart.

He expressed himself, with almost tears in his eyes, of the reception your Lordship gave him in the House of Lords. In short, if I might be permitted on such a subject to speak, I think it has been a most serious misfortune to all parties, and even to the country, that he was not included in the *projet* of Lord Grenville's administration. In his train, I am satisfied he would have been contented to remain; an able and efficient coadjutor he would have occasionally been found, while his general indolence and habits of life would have kept far from his practice that political activity upon which he has been forced, by the apparent proscription and perpetual system of exclusion he seemed doomed to meet from all parties. The elevation he is now raised to, he will struggle to maintain, and henceforward, he will be either a most troublesome friend, or a most formidable enemy.

With respect to France, there is not a doubt but that the warlike disposition of her ruler, is very considerably diluted, and that he would gladly make peace. It is a remarkable fact that, in the whole of the last campaign, he never quitted his carriage, or was on horseback. That he has made overtures is equally certain; but as he maintains his pretentions to Spain and her Indies, although at the expense of almost every other point which could now be in dispute with this country, nothing has come of them. But the knowledge of his being in the disposition is a great point, and will, if ever anything feasible occur, be acted upon either by these people, or those now most likely to succeed them. The movement on Cadiz has been a gross blunder on the part of the French, and must, in all human probability produce another serious disaster to all their troops, who are to the southward of the Sierra. In the meantime, Lord Wellington holds the armies of Soult in the north, and Ney in the centre completely in check, and even threatens Madrid. There is at this moment no disunion in the present government of Spain, all uneasiness being quashed by the appointment of Albuquerque, Ambassador to

the Court of London. Portugal has never been in more prosperity, and nothing is dreaded in it but the return of the old government. In India, they seem to have been proceeding from bad to worse. I do not here speak of the proceedings at Madras, your Lordship has already decided upon them; but Lord Minto's conduct, both with respect to Persia and China seems to be most strange. At the very moment that we were subsidizing the ambassador of the former, renewing every relation, and creating fresh ties of friendship with her, and sending at her own request, officers, engineers, and a minister to that country, to the total exclusion of France, and the machinations of Bonaparte, our Indian government seemed intent on conquering her, and an army of 25,000 men was levied, apparently with that purpose. In China, the seizure of Macao, our retention of it for three months, the suspension of the Canton trade during the same period, and the desperate outrages committed on the Chinese in the river, in which many of the latter, unresisting, and in cold blood, were killed, have all afforded proofs of misconception and mismanagement, that put Lord Minto's character and conduct in a most questionable point of view. This is all, however, *ex parte* statement, but is most probably the case made out for the recall of Lord Minto, which has actually taken place. Even the King has been advised to write to the Persian Court, a letter disavowing *in toto* Lord Minto's proceedings in regard of that country, a measure which I should suppose would have the desired effect, without letters of recall. I am sorry to say the Chinese transactions mix considerably with O'Brien Drury's reputation, and not, as they are now stated, to his advantage.

I have very little doubt but that Robert Dundas succeeds Lord Minto in India. He has had some training for such an employment. It takes him out of the Cabinet here, which is the last hold that family will have of office for many many years, perhaps for ever, puts an end to all his father's intrigues for place, and makes at once a provision for him, and a desirable vacancy at

home. Who will fill it I have not a conjecture. Had not Anstruther formally separated himself from Lord Wellesley, he would probably have been the man. But it wont do now, though the former has made since the fate of the Walcheren inquiry, some very marked movements towards the reassumption of old habits and intercourse.

May 1, 1810.

As I thought it most probable, so it has turned out. In the course of last week, Mr. Perceval consented that overtures should be made to Lord Sidmouth and Canning, who were, accordingly, spoken to, the former by Yorke, the latter by Lord Wellesley, but as nothing specific, or indeed, anything but of a very general nature was allowed to be proposed, neither of these personages would commit themselves, and all is broken off in these quarters. With respect to Castlereagh, I know nothing. Thus, with barely the miserable shifting of Mulgrave, administration meet an enraged, I may add, an infuriated people, with all the additional unpopularity of the new First Lord of the Admiralty, of the Duke of Brunswick's provision, and of George Villiers' defalcation. Three points, such is the temper of the times, upon which no man can make a common argument with one of the multitude, be his powers what they may, with the slightest chance of altering his opinions, which are all tooth and nail against the government.

To add to this embarrassment, the Scotch are more than wavering, and if they do not fly off before the end of the Session, they will take their own ground after it. This is to be gathered from two circumstances; in the first place, Robert Dundas refused the Admiralty, and although he has promised for more than a year two reports upon the affairs of the East India Company, and that government is quite at a stand for want of them, he cannot be got to do anything, or even latterly

to be seen upon that, or any other subject by his colleagues, upon official business. Both certainly prove a want of cordial co-operation on his part, that looks like separation. Your Lordship would hardly believe that Perceval seriously proposed on this disappointment, to offer the ordnance to Lord Moira, but this was overruled; he next proposed Lord Harrington, where, though he had some votes with him, he was still foiled, so that literally Lord Moira has it as the *pis aller* of the government. All other causes of jealousy and chagrin remain in full force among themselves, and certainly it is impossible, as they are now constituted, that they can meet another parliament.

The only hope Perceval can naturally have, is in the turn which peace, or rather accommodation with America, may give the public mind; as also the successes in Spain against France, which may be looked for. The former, in my opinion, as well from the devotion of Pinckney to Lord Wellesley, as the late rapacious act of Bonaparte may be looked on as certain; to insure the latter, money (soldiers he wants none) is sending in profusion to Lord Wellington, hitherto but scantily supplied.

It gives me great pleasure to hear from Lord Wellesley that you were looking so well at Carleton House; your reception of him was greatly gratifying.

Purvis comes home, being inefficient, and disliked—succeeded by Keates.

Some of the results of the Walcheren inquiry may now be laid before the reader.

EARL TEMPLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Tuesday.

My dear Father,

The examinations, as far as they have gone, are decidedly hostile to Ministers. The Commander-in-chief never consulted

upon the whole of the expedition, desired to give his opinion upon the practicability of an attack upon Antwerp, gives in a memoir, in which he discusses the two modes, one by land from Ostend, &c., and the other by a combined movement up the Scheldt—the former he represents as impracticable, the latter as most hazardous. The project of the expedition never laid before him in detail; the force of the enemy likely to be opposed to the British force, at no time stated to him; no information in any of the offices within his knowledge of the present state of the fortifications of Antwerp; never saw any plan of them; was consulted by Lord Castlereagh as to what they were in 1793, when he commanded there, but Lord Castlereagh never pretended he had any later account. He was not consulted on the choice of the commander, but thinks the appointment of Lord Chatham a good and proper one. Under no circumstances could Antwerp be taken by a *coup-de-main*. Ten thousand men in that fortress could always stop four times their number. Had the British troops landed at Sandvliet to proceed up to Antwerp, they must have left 15,000 men in Walcheren, enough to mask Catsand, a corps to besiege and take Lille, &c., and another to mark Bergen-op-Zoom, and the other fortresses to the left. Query. How many would have got to Antwerp? So much for the Commander-in-chief. The Physician-general never was consulted about the Walcheren fever until the 10th September. Never knew when the expedition was going, had not, therefore, the opportunity of making that medical provision which he would have made had he known where it was going.

Such are the principal features of the evidence as it has yet appeared. Upon the whole, I have no doubt of the case turning out such a one as will call for impeachment; but nothing will finally be done to turn these people out, until the inquiry is over, and the ultimate resolutions moved, when they must go. This is certainly the feeling of Ministers themselves. Canning evidently means to attack Lord Chatham, and Castlereagh

the concluding part of the expedition after his own resignation.

CH. T.

Lord Grenville suffered at this time from an inflammatory attack, that alarmed his friends. He had been in a bad state of health, and anxiety, united with incessant attention to his parliamentary duties, aggravated the symptoms till his case became serious. The writer's estimate of the two fashionable doctors is more curious than instructive. If Sir Henry Halford prescribed everything in his *vocabulary*, we are not surprised at the failure of such remedies.

The Report of the Select Committee on Privileges, was brought up on the 23rd of May, on which occasion Mr. Brougham made the "abominable speech" referred to. It had the effect of defeating Horner's motion to recommit the Report, without a division. The writer conveys a very unsatisfactory picture of the position and prospects of Opposition—its want of cohesion was evidently menacing its existence, and the absence in either House, of Lord Grenville and Mr. Wyndham, rendered it so ineffective, that Lord Grey's despair of ever making head with such a party, may be readily believed. Sir Francis Burdett's display of frantic folly, and all its mischievous consequences, added considerably to its disorganization. Still it may have been consoling to some of its members to know, that the government were equally loose and unstable. The resolutions referred to at the close of Mr. Grenville's letter of 31st May, were those moved by Mr. Wynne, on the

Privileges of Parliament, on the 8th of June. They were negatived in a small House by a majority of more than five to one.

The Catholic claims were brought forward, in the Commons towards the close of May; in the Lords on the 6th of June; but large majorities negatived the motion for their relief, in both instances. The imprudent course pursued by some of the leading Catholics in Ireland, which had elicited Lord Grenville's celebrated letter to Lord Fingall, produced in England an unfavourable impression, and made more distant the measure of relief, which Lord Grenville and other warm and zealous friends of Ireland, had been labouring disinterestedly for years to secure.

It was during Lord Grenville's indisposition that Lord Grey submitted to the House of Lords a motion, on the 13th of June, ostensibly for an address to the King, but really to express censure on his Majesty's Ministers; Lord Grey made a powerful speech, but his motion was negatived by a majority of nearly two to one. Mr. Brougham's motion in the House of Commons on the same day, for an address to his Majesty, praying him to cause further steps to be taken to put a stop to the Slave Trade, fared better; it was agreed to unanimously, and the same success attended a similar motion of Lord Holland, in the House of Lords, on the 18th. On the 23rd, the Session ended, with the customary speech from the throne.

MR. W. H FREMANTLE TO EARL TEMPLE.

Stanhope Street, May 26, 1810.

My dear Lord,

I have just got a note from Mr. Grenville, from Dropmore, who says Lord Grenville is rather better, though last night he "had a little accession of cough, and was fatigued. The blister had risen a little on his head." Sir H. Halford was to see him again this morning, and Mr. Grenville "had no doubt that on the whole he would be satisfied with the state in which he would find him. It is, however," he says, "evident that a total cessation from all business for some time will be indispensably necessary to his recovery." To say the truth, I do not like the account altogether; I think the attack in the head is not a new seizure, and Lord Grenville has looked extremely ill all the winter. I saw Sir H. Halford after he had seen Lord Grenville, on Thursday morning, and after he had ordered the blister on the head; he told me he apprehended no danger, although he thought him extremely ill, and that it would be a work of time. Lord George is gone to Dropmore to-day, and as he will probably return to-morrow morning, I shall know more particularly his opinion of him. I wish extremely he had Bailey instead of Halford, as the former is so particularly skilled in anatomy, and is peculiarly fortunate and clever in attacks of the head. I can speak on this subject from experience, for I was tormented even to torture, for six months in my head, constantly; Sir H. Halford attended me, and prescribed everything in his vocabulary, without effect; I sent for Bailey, and he relieved me in a week. I mention this to you most earnestly, because if you go to Dropmore, I am very anxious you should press it on Lord Grenville or Mr. Grenville. I know how delicate a subject this is, and therefore I don't like to write about it, but it is really most important, if he don't get better, that every means, and every aid should be had.

I am afraid it is all over with poor Wyndham—his fever has increased in a most alarming manner, and the wound assumed a very unfavourable appearance yesterday; in fact, those who know the particulars of his state, have almost given over hope, and I assure you it has cast a very general gloom in the political society. With respect to the House of Commons, I perfectly agree with you in all you say, but it was difficult to bring up Perceval on the reform question, after Canning had completely engrossed the argument, and exhausted it; and indeed, it was quite needless for him to speak. Edward Cooke told me yesterday that he knew for certain an offer had been made within these ten days to Lord Sidmouth, to form a strong administration, composed of his friends, the present Minister, Castlereagh and Canning, and his answer was that he had no personal animosities, but he could never lend himself to the formation of a government, the members of which could not confide in one another, and which must be the case with such a government.

Brougham made a most abominable speech the other night, upon the report of the Committee of Privileges; I did not hear it, but it is said to have been by far the best he has made, but it was completely throwing the shield over Ministers, and defending the opinions of the Committee, and the whole of the mode of proceedings which had been adopted. The question was only whether the report should lay upon the table, and by no means called for such an argument. It has created bad blood between Horner and Brougham, the former having taken the other line, and Adam and Wynn are outrageous with him; in fact, it is only another proof of the total incapacity of the present Opposition to act upon any system.

Ponsonby made a most admirable speech last night, on the Catholic question, and exposed Dr. Milner most completely, proving by his own letters, which he read, his duplicity and falsehood. I don't quite agree with you about the Oxford instructions; I wish Grattan had not so flippantly mentioned the

University, and it would then never have occurred; they were willing to remain silent, had they been left alone. There were many in the minority on reform who surprised us, Lord Gower, Vernon, and Lord Euston.

I rode with Lord Grey yesterday, he is quite *au désespoir* at everything; and particularly at Lord Grenville's illness, he says what is true, if he don't recover, and that shortly, there is an end of everything; he said he should put off his motion *in toto*—in short, he was more in the dumps, and more enraged against his own friends, and the general conduct of Opposition, than you or I could have been: I am quite sure you do right in staying away, but you are supposed to be in wrath, and I am plagued to know upon what account, and with whom. Huskisson, I think, has taken his decided line of opposition; we had certainly a most decided triumph in debate the other night, on finance—Canning would come if we would take him, but Whitbread will take care to keep up that animosity.

MR. T. GRENVILLE TO EARL TEMPLE.

Dropmore, May 27, 1810, 10 p.m.

My dear Temple,

I have found myself obliged to state Vaughan's opinion to Lord Grey, Ponsonby, &c., and, however reluctantly, to show them the impossibility of Lord Grenville's attending any business whatever in the House of Lords this Session. It is much to be regretted that he must, under this interdict, abandon both the Catholic question and Lord Grey's address; but the risk of exertion, after such a malady, is so evident, that Lord Grey and his other political friends are as anxious as I can be, to put his attendance entirely out of the question; and I have sent to Lord Grey, Lord Grenville's proxy for the Catholic question.

I hear Ponsonby spoke remarkably well upon it, and made a notable statement of all the lies and equivocations of Milner.

The debate is adjourned to Friday, so that I suppose you will come in for the remnant of it. I am very desirous that Charles* should move his propositions, in order to put upon the journals the evidence of such being the opinions of some of the members of the House of Commons; and I rejoice to hear that Althorp has promised to second him, which will be very creditable to them both; but division is out of the question, from the timidity of our own friends, who dare not face the unpopularity of the cry of the day. The weak and childish Ministers profess to mean to let the case go to a jury, if necessary, and then to come with their panacea of a power of supersedeas by Act of Parliament; and some of our own friends are weak enough to approve this. What short-sighted policy! The fear of Cobbett and Waithman drives them from the exercise of the rights and independence of the House of Commons; and they have not the sense to see that Cobbett and Waithman will clamour more loudly against the novel power of supersedeas, than they ever could have done against the accustomed and established exercise of the known and extant rights of the House of Commons.

The accounts of poor Wyndham are very alarming; yet the latest report is something less desperate.

MR. T. GRENVILLE TO EARL TEMPLE.

Dropmore, May 31, 1810.

My dear Lord Temple,

I do not delay to acknowledge your letter of the 28th, which I have this moment received. My brother is going on in a very favourable and satisfactory state; not calling up the Doctor in the middle of the night, as some newspapers say, nor going out an airing, and preparing for the House of Lords, as I read in the 'Morning Chronicle,' but staying quietly in his room,

* Mr. Charles Williams Wynn.

where Lady Grenville and I read to him, and guarding against any relapse by perfect quiet and rest.

My view of public affairs is, I confess, gloomy enough, nor do I see prospect enough of any good being done in this Session of parliament, to urge you to any exertion or attendance, from any hope that any advantage, public or private, can be worked out in the present circumstances of the House, of the parties in it, of the Session, and of the public mind.

With regard to the question of privilege, my opinion has always been most strenuously against that which the House adopted, when they ordered the Serjeant and the Speaker to plead in the Court of King's Bench. Nevertheless, I am glad that Charles will put his resolutions upon record, because it is something to show that the opinions stated in them were, at least, entertained by a mover and by a seconder; and were recorded as parliamentary opinions in this general abandonment of all the ancient privileges of the House of Commons. It affords, likewise, a possible opportunity of correcting, in some degree, the error of their former vote; because, it might be argued, that the House chose to give the King's Bench, by their plea, the formal knowledge that the case of Burdett versus Abbott is a case of privilege; and it would be no inconsistency in the House, after that first step in the cause, to stop there, and denounce vengeance against any further prosecution of it. But by what I hear, all the Ministers, and most of the Opposition, are against Charles's resolutions; and, therefore, I do not advise him to divide the House, but to content himself with putting his resolutions on the journals.

Lord Grenville hopes to attend Oxford; but he has put off Bristol to a later period. Your father is expected in town on Tuesday, on which day I hope to go also to London.

Yours, most affectionately,

T. G.

The first week in July was devoted by Lord Grenville to the performance of his official duties as Chancellor of the University at Oxford, where he presided at the celebration of the commemoration. It was in every respect a most brilliant festival, and brought together a very large number of his friends and admirers, many of whom were members of the university. Prizes were awarded, honorary degrees conferred, orations delivered, and odes recited; to these attractions were added Madame Catalani's voice, and Mr. Sadler's balloon—the latter described in the cotemporary account as "a new phenomenon." Occupied as he was at this time, we are not surprised to find a cessation of his correspondence.

The summer of 1810 was further distinguished by the abdication of Louis Bonaparte of the crown of Holland. This distinguished man (the father of the present Emperor of the French), had displeased his brother, simply because he could not reconcile himself to sacrifice the interests of the people over whom he ruled, to realise the ambitious designs of his imperial relative. Holland was treated as a French province, and King Louis as a Lord-Lieutenant; the latter was of too honourable a nature to submit to become a tool as well as a puppet, and with as much spirit as dignity, threw off the royal trappings he would not disgrace. A few months later another sovereign, the King of Sweden, found his position equally intolerable. He abdicated, and was succeeded by Bernadotte.

As will presently be seen, our inaction in the Peninsular had concluded. Lord Wellington's letter is an admirable

specimen of his style—frank, generous, and manly—his cordial appreciation of the enemy puts to shame the abuse of his illustrious opponent; the former would never have degraded himself by calling the French eagle a vulture, nor the French soldier a brigand.

LORD WELLINGTON TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Almeida, July 17, 1810.

My dear Lord,

I have had no opportunity of sending letters to England since I wrote to you on the 11th, at which time I had not received the report of the circumstances which had led to the death of poor Talbot.

I now inclose a copy of General Crauford's report, and the copy of a letter from Captain Cocks, of the 16th Dragoons, to Sir Stapleton Cotton, which, I think, conveys a clearer idea of what passed.

The little body of French infantry appear to have conducted themselves in the most gallant style; but they must have been cut off as well as their friends of the cavalry, if the appearance of our own Hussars, coming out of Baracal had not been taken for the enemy, and had not suspended for a moment the operations against them, during which they entered the woods, and retired upon Celorico. However, what has happened upon this occasion is another instance of what infantry, when forced, can do against the best cavalry; and will convince our officers that they cannot be attacked with impunity. I have witnessed and known of many similar occurrences.

The enemy in our front have made no movement of importance since the fall of Ciudad Rodrigo. They are bringing across the Tagus the corps which they had upon the Guadiana;

and General Hill's corps is likewise about to move across the Tagus.

I beg to present my best compliments to Lady Buckingham and Lady Mary, and to Lord and Lady Temple, and Lord George, if they should be at Stowe; and that your Lordship will believe me,

Ever your most affectionate
And obliged humble servant,
WELLINGTON.

The writer of the following communications continues to unveil the whole course of political intrigue, from sources, the trustworthiness of which we are not permitted to doubt. That he was behind the scenes, there cannot be a question —that he made known all that he beheld there, is equally apparent.

Oct. 1. 1810.

Having in my former letters given your Lordship all I could collect on our affairs abroad, it is in this, my object to state all I could learn respecting those at home, among which the state of the government takes, of course, the lead. I shall only premise, that I have for every thing I shall state on this head, the strongest grounds for belief, and I can safely claim your Lordship's for every point of that statement.

At the close of the Session, Ministry naturally felt that they must be greatly weakened, whatever their former strength might have been, by the loss of the Duke of Portland, Lord Chatham, and Messrs. Castlereagh and Canning, in a comparatively very short period, with no balancing acquisition, save that of Lord Wellesley—for Ryder, even in their own estimation, was (and is) worse than nothing. Huskisson's too, and Sturges Bourne's defection were not equivalently supplied. But, whatever might

be Mr. Perceval's own conception of the government thus plucked and pared to the quick, and, however he might be disposed to try its strength as it stood, another parliamentary campaign; one of his coadjutors, and the latest of his allies, would not suffer him to enjoy his dream of superiority in tranquillity.

With reference to every circumstance of Lord Wellesley's peculiar situation, your Lordship will easily conceive that it was essential to all his views to make the government of which he was become a member, as strong as possible. On its existence depended his retaining official situation, so long sought, and obtained with such difficulty; strength alone could give it permanency. Again, as the measure of calling for additional strength was avowedly and notoriously his; so, whoever was brought in, in consequence, would be most probably, at his devotion, and form his strength in the Cabinet, where he was miserably weak. With these reasons, there mixt one of a personal and more private nature, which was as follows: In the course of the long and complicated game which Canning had played the preceding year, however, in the main, referable solely to his personal interests—to his hatred of some, and contempt of the whole of his colleagues, there was always too much of the ostensible wish to bring Lord Wellesley into office, not to make it matter of surprise to the public in general, and of deep resentment to Canning's friends, his (Lord Wellesley's) taking the Foreign Seals to the exclusion of that gentleman: for all the reasons which actuated Lord Wellesley upon this occasion, I refer your Lordship to my letters of November and December last—but stand he excused by them or not, this debt was to be paid.

Accordingly this last Session of parliament had scarcely been brought to a close, when his Lordship in a communication with Mr. Perceval, reminded him that he took office avowedly to prevent the King from throwing himself upon those who did not possess his confidence, to form a government, and to prevent

such an one as did, from breaking up. That the events which had deprived it of so many and such efficient members of its body, rendered it absolutely necessary that efforts should be made to recruit its wasted strength, and that overtures for that purpose should be made to Lord Sidmouth, Mr. Canning, and Lord Castlereagh—always it is to be understood that he would not continue a member of any Cabinet in which Mr. Canning was not included, should any change whatever take place, and that the offer made to him, (Mr. Canning,) must be one rated by his fair and just pretensions to office; and, finally, that unless these measures were put in act, he would himself retire from office.

To all this, (I have reason to think with considerable reluctance,) Perceval acceded, but hesitated at taking Castlereagh in; in the first instance, alleging both, that the weight of unpopularity was against him, and the difficulties that at that moment must exist in putting him and Canning to bed together, were insuperable, the latter's wound being hardly yet skinned over; but, had no objection to make room for him in the state machine under more favourable auspices, and at a future period. In the meantime, the experiment was to go forward with Lord Sidmouth and Canning, and steps were accordingly taken for that purpose. What the Cabinet arrangements would have been in case Sidmouth and Canning had come in, I cannot well tell, neither I believe was it ever finally determined. But Ryder and Lord Mulgrave were to go out; Lord Camden, the next most eligible for dismission to Ryder, being kept in to keep his nephew in good humour. If Canning did not choose the Admiralty, I have reason to think Lord Wellesley would have given up the Foreign Seals to him, and taken the War department; the rest would have been easily settled.

But all these movements were stopt *in limine*, by Lord Sidmouth's positive refusal to sit in the same Cabinet with Canning. No persuasion or solicitations could prevail upon him to alter this determination—always professing his good wishes to the

government as it stood, his acquiescence with its principles, his readiness to take a share in it, but never, never more colleague with Canning!

As this overture had, however, drawn out Lord Sidmouth's views with respect to acting with the existing government, Lord Wellesley, at whose instance it had been made, found himself awkwardly situated; he had shewn administration where they might certainly gain strength, but was himself, by his adherence to his principle of Canning's being included, should any change take place, the real obstacle to such acquisition. Accordingly, he pressed, in the most eager manner, his own resignation, with a full assurance of support to the taking in Lord Sidmouth, which was, however, rejected *toto cœlo*, by all the members of administration, with the exception of Lord Camden, who approved of this project extremely.

If your Lordship please to revert to the dicta laid down by Lord Wellesley, and assented to by Perceval, as I have already stated them, namely, that the government was to be strengthened if possible, that Sidmouth, Castlereagh, and Canning were there, to whom that principle could be applied; and that he (Lord Wellesley) would not continue in office if any change took place which should not include Canning, you will see that there remained only one other way to shape the meditated alliance, which would meet every difficulty. Sidmouth singly would not do, for Canning was not there—a *sine quâ non* of Lord Wellesley's. All three, Sidmouth, Canning, and Castlereagh, were equally hopeless, for the first would not agree with the second. Castlereagh alone was equally objectionable with Sidmouth alone, on Lord Wellesley's account; and the proposition of Canning alone was barely mooted, but instantly negatived by Ministers; and, surely, very wisely, for this step would instantly have thrown his declared personal enemies, Sidmouth and Castlereagh, into open opposition; certainly with great reason, and I know the fact to be so. The only mode, therefore, to be pur-

sued, was to bring in Castlereagh and Canning, at the risk of greatly displeasing Sidmouth.

Your Lordship will readily see that much of the summer was consumed before things came to this last stage of the business; but it at length arrived to a distinct proposition of the above; when, to the surprise of all concerned, Lord Castlereagh positively refused coming into office under the present circumstances and juncture. Even Lord Camden pressed him upon it, who was with Ryder, to make the requisite room. But in vain, the Admiralty, which was to be his place (Yorke going into the Secretariat) had no preponderating charm to cause him to forego his resolution. His reasons are briefly these: "As for his private quarrel with, and opinion of Canning, he considered them disposed of by the *éclaircissement* which had taken place; but he thought his coming into office with that person would have an effect very detrimental to the interests of a government he wished well to, and which he meant decidedly to support, and also very liable to a ruinous construction to his own character with the public, when all the circumstances which had occurred respecting his quitting office came to be considered." Upon grounds similar to these, but much more at large, he positively, and, indeed, most peremptorily, declined his offered share in administration. The ultimatum upon this point is barely five weeks old; and upon every point of the whole statement your Lordship may implicitly rely.

The result of all this is, that no change whatever will take place in the existing government, unless something of a nature to change it altogether, shall occur in the interval previously to the next meeting of parliament. Something, however, has grown out of it, which may make some alteration in its mode of conducting the public business.

On the breaking up of every negotiation which Lord Wellesley called for, in furtherance of his principle so strongly laid down, that of "strengthening administration," he was appealed to by

Mr. Perceval, whether all was not done that he required, and whether he was not, therefore, still more strongly and peremptorily bound to give government his strongest and most efficient assistance, so long as it held together. To this, in the gross, Lord Wellesley assented; but added, "that as government had no longer any hopes of that efficient strength and aid he had sought for, so the greater weight of labour and responsibility would be thrown upon him, (Lord Wellesley)." In this view of the subject, he added, "You, Mr. Perceval, are going out of town, so am I, but when we again meet, you must have your mind made up to give me a far greater share of patronage, and in the conduct of the war than I have hitherto had, and which in every event, I think myself entitled to." With these words, and no reply, they parted.

When your Lordship will read over what I have written, I trust to your kindness to make allowances for the manner in which I have gone into this long detail; it has been written under many circumstances of disquietude, uneasiness, and difficulty, but for the matter, as far as it is connected with facts, I can vouch for its truth to the most minute particular, in the most serious manner. Your Lordship will see the application of the whole that I have written to existing circumstances is, that there will be no change whatever in the present government, so there will be every reasonable expectation in government (and I believe well-founded) that these overtures will have had the effect, upon all great questions, of securing the support of these people, for as in some shape or other, refusal to take office came from them, and that they entered into the most barefaced negotiation, therefore they cannot in any fairness or consistency, refuse support to measures, which they have so distinctly offered, under conditions merely personal to themselves, to support. This is a result very much to the taste, I apprehend of all concerned, except themselves, who are thus neutralised, and clearly placed *hors-de-combat*, at least for the ensuing Session.

The calm which had followed the fierce agitation of political parties, was now about to be disturbed by an incident which threatened a more violent commotion. This was the return of the distressing malady which had already visited the King several times; it had, doubtless, been excited by a combination of irritating causes, but the immediate cause was the fatal illness of his beloved daughter, the Princess Amelia. At first, it was supposed that like the preceding visitations, it would produce only a temporary cessation of the regal functions, but in a short time, the greater violence of the attack became evident, and the necessity of some provision in the State to meet such an exigency, forced itself upon the attention of all public men. Naturally all eyes were now directed towards the Prince of Wales, but his Royal Highness considered it politic to assume a marked reserve; occasionally, however, allowing each party to believe that he looked to them as his particular support. The Opposition were naturally in a state of considerable excitement—the government, at least, equally disturbed. The Prince did not think it necessary to betray either gratification or anxiety. In this interval, the hopes and fears of all parties were kept up to fever heat by the varying reports respecting the King's symptoms. Sometimes he was better, sometimes worse—one day reported likely to recover within a given time—the next the rumour represented death as preferable to existence.

Where I found, when last in town, nought but exultation and triumph, I now, on the contrary, witness depression and despair

in the strongest degree. In consequence of a most unadvised indulgence, arising from overweening confidence, the King has experienced a thorough relapse from the flattering state in which he recently appeared. He attended for three hours on the —— inst., in arranging the will of the Princess Amelia, according to what he conceived her wishes, and immediately fell back into the incoherency which forms the prominent feature of his malady, from which I have great reason to believe he has never since, even for the shortest interval, varied into sanity. This is a most mortifying reverse, and is felt accordingly. Lords Wellesley and Camden went down on Wednesday to Windsor, and the former interrogated the physicians for three hours together, and from his minutes thereon, drew up a report historically detailed, of the rise, progress, present state, and probable issue of the disease, which was signed by him and Lord Camden, for the information of the Cabinet on Thursday. What the result has been I cannot conjecture. My informant left town early yesterday, but Lord Wellesley's language on Wednesday evening was, "that he would not act in this matter in any sneaking, or mean way; that if the King was not well enough to sign the commission before the 29th, that the physicians should be publicly examined, and that upon that evidence he would be guided as a juror. If it were favourable towards a speedy recovery, he would then support the present order of things to the last. If the contrary, or that it would even be a question of a protracted or distant recovery, however certain the physicians might be of such a result, he would not hesitate a moment in giving the country an efficient government, the want of which has already begun to be most seriously felt." That the latter will be the result, I am confident he is prepared for and expects, as indeed does everybody else.

I cannot but think the Prince did himself no service by the part his friends took in the recent debate, while his conduct was at once a desertion of his own friends. It has enabled these

people to say, and they will act upon it, he (the Prince) will be too happy to take whatever we may think proper to give him.

That the Prince will choose his own servants, to the entire exclusion of the present Ministers, the latter are perfectly aware. Between his royal highness and Lord Wellesley personally there is no kindness—much the contrary. It so happened that, on the day when the Ministers went down to Windsor to acquaint the King with the details of the battle of Busaco, that a council was called there for the purpose of proroguing parliament. To this, all the princes (at least four of them) were summoned, but not the Prince of Wales, although on the spot; that the latter was piqued at this, Lord Wellesley concludes from the following circumstance. As soon as his audience was over with the King, he proceeded to the Prince, full of his brother, the battle, and the very kind manner in which the King behaved upon the occasion. But to his inexpressible annoyance, the Prince immediately upon seeing him, called out, "I condole with you heartily, my dear Lord, upon poor Arthur's retreat; Massena has quite out-generalled him." Your Lordship will easily judge how mortifying this was; and it so far got the better of him, as to induce him to express himself far too warmly for the place and the person. Ever since, there has been the most marked coolness.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Oct. 26, 1810.

I have this day received, as a mark of friendship, and with liberty to communicate it to you alone, the information that the King's former indisposition is returning upon him. You may guess from whom I hear it. The person who mentioned it to me, by desire of the other, tells me that he himself met the King in his ride yesterday, talking so loud and fast as to be remarked

at a considerable distance. In the evening, the fact was ascertained by the information of one least likely to invent or exaggerate it.

Lord Arden, who rode with the King yesterday, went to town last night, and is to be back again for the ride of this day. This shows that it is not bad enough yet to prevent his being suffered to ride; but you know how he is surrounded at those times, as, indeed, at every other.

This is all I know or have heard. I make no remarks, nor need I sign this.

MR. W. H. FREMANTLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Englefield Green, Oct. 31, 1801,

My dear Lord,

You will probably have seen by the papers the situation of the King. They will not, however, have been apprised of the full extent of his malady. You may, therefore, hear from me, that it is, at the present moment, and has been from the beginning of his attack, which took place on the 25th, a confirmed and very violent return of his former malady. For some time before the physicians were called upon to attend him, he had shown evident symptoms of the disorder; but, for the last two or three days, he has been gradually getting worse, and the strongest medical discipline which he has undergone, has not removed or lessened the irritation. Great pains are taken to keep the extent of it from the public, but it is perfectly known that such is the nature of the attack, though not the extent of it. You may be assured, from positive knowledge on my part, that he is extremely bad to-day, and the most serious apprehension exists as to his amendment of the disorder. I cannot give you my authority, but it is unquestionable. I will let you know what

further occurs. Pray don't say you heard from me, as it might betray my channel.

Ever truly yours,
W. H. F.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Dropmore, Nov. 1, 1810.

You will have heard, my dearest brother, of the meeting of parliament, which takes place to-day. I am indignant at the Ministers giving no previous notice of this, though they have been informed of the necessity of it for near a week.

I have just seen my correspondent. Nothing has been said there of future measures. It is supposed they are still undecided.

Reluctant as I am to engage in such a scene, I have determined to go to town the 8th, and to stay till the 14th. How much longer I know not, but I do not quite despair of getting back here immediately after that day.

Perhaps, being so near, you will come for that day, or before. I should much wish to talk it all over with you.

My present notion is, that the best for all parties would be to follow the precedent of 1788-9 as nearly as possible. It is an authoritative decision, and by adhering to it, great evils of various kinds will be avoided.

MR. W. H. FREMANTLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Englefield Green, Nov. 1, 1810.

My dear Lord,

The King continues as bad as ever. The irritation has never

ceased since Tuesday, and has gradually increased; he is quite ungovernable, but as yet nobody has been called in as a medical adviser but Halford, Bayley, Heberden, and Dundas. Unless the mind is more subdued to-morrow, further advice will be thought necessary, and of persons who have before been consulted upon his malady.

The worst symptom is the great and increasing agitation of mind, without the accompaniment of fever. He talks incessantly, and, in short, has exactly every symptom which you have before seen detailed in the reports of his former attacks.

The Prince is at Windsor, keeping very quiet. He is quite right, and has made communications of the most satisfactory nature. Nothing can look better than his conduct at the present moment. This you may be assured of from me. The warrant for the Commissioners to prorogue had not been signed, and the King was incapable of signing it. The Chancellor and Lord Wellesley came to Windsor to-day, to ascertain this fact, and to examine the physicians. Three questions were put by them. First. Is the King capable of signing his name to any instruments. Answer. The King is at this moment incapable. Second. What has in your opinion caused the King's illness? Answer. The unfortunate state of the Princess Amelia, which has agitated his mind. Third. Do you think the King likely to recover? Answer. We have known many instances of recovery in similar cases. These you may rely upon were the questions and answers. They saw the King, and when the Chancellor came out of the room, he threw up his hands in a state of despondency. The Chancellor afterwards went to the Prince of Wales, (I don't know whether Lord Wellesley did or not,) and reported the state of the King. The Prince said little, "he had only to lament it, but it was for the King's servants to act." This is what I am assured (and I believe) was the Prince's answer. The King did not get one wink of sleep the night before last, and merely dozed for a very

little time last night; this day he is as bad as he can be. I understand, (but that you will see from the paper,) that parliament will be adjourned for a fortnight. I will let you know as things go on.

Yours most truly,
W. H. F.

MR. W. H. FREMANTLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Englefield Green, Nov. 2, 1810.

My dear Lord,

The King is worse to-day—nothing can be more dreadful than his situation for the last three days—he is quite ungovernable. Yesterday, at six o'clock, an express was sent for Simmonds's people. He came down at once, accompanied by his son and four assistants. He desired to have the sole management of the King, without which, he could do nothing. This was refused him by the physicians, in consequence of which, he went back with his troop immediately. Heberden went this morning in search of somebody else, and it is supposed Willis's people. The object is for the physicians to control and govern, but to have some of the mad people under them. This seems great responsibility on their part, with less hope of saving the patient.

He is most ungovernable—in the extremest state of madness; and has been much too ungovernable to take anything but a small quantity of magnesia, for the last twenty-four hours. The physicians are of no use whatever—they have no power or influence—indeed he is incapable of any reasoning whatever. The Princess Amelia died this morning, it is thought this may work some amendment, but I am afraid he is too far gone, for anything now to do him good. The Prince is here, all goes on right in that

quarter as yet, but the cabal is rising rapidly, and it is now become a scene of the most violent intrigue.

Ever truly,
W. H. F.

LORD GRENVILLE TO EARL TEMPLE.

Dropmore, Nov. 3, 1810.

DEAR TEMPLE,

I go to town the 8th, to be at hand for consultations, meetings, and talks. As yet, I know nothing of the line that anybody is to take, except, which I much approve, that I see the Prince of Wales remains quiet at Windsor.

Of the King's recovery from this attack, there can, I think, be no doubt. The experience of three former temporary attacks is decisive. The present symptoms are, not as Perceval asserts peculiarly mild, but extremely violent. This present violence is not, I believe, a prognostic of longer duration.

Whether the Ministers mean or not to make themselves Regents for the two, three, or four months that we have to look to, I know not. Perceval's speech looks like it.

I know nothing as yet of the line that any body on any side is to take. To my brother and myself, our line appears clearly enough chalked out, by the forward part we took in establishing a precedent of recent date, and directly in point. If I saw reason now to think I was wrong then, I would frankly own it; but my sentiments are directly opposite.

I hope we shall meet soon.

G.

The King's malady now excited both attention and anxiety; the most alarming reports were in circulation, and

it was of the first importance that public men of eminence should have exact information respecting his Majesty's real state, and the manner in which a knowledge of it was influencing various classes of politicians—hence these frequent accounts from a trustworthy person, in a position to know all that was going on, must have been regarded as invaluable.

MR. W. H. FREMANTLE, M.P., TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Englefield Green, Nov. 5, Monday,
Seven o'Clock.

You will see the King announced in the bulletin as better. On Saturday he had not a wink of sleep. On Sunday morning they applied leeches to his temples; he was calmer, and they placed a pillow of hops under his head. He slept on Sunday evening and night six hours; but less to twelve o'clock this day. He has not had the interval of one moment's reason. I only speak up to the time I can answer for, and as far as this goes, depend most strictly upon the certainty of what I tell you.

W. H. F.

MR. W. H. FREMANTLE, M.P., TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Tuesday, Nov. 6, Seven o'Clock.

I meant exactly what I said, that his fever has not been great, his pulse seldom above 80, which is nothing; last night, three-quarters of an hour's sleep, and no more, and not the interval of one moment's reason up to twelve o'clock to-day. This, you may depend upon positively. I have company just come, and I

must break off; but you shall have a letter of more detail to-morrow. It is most difficult to procure intelligence, and the jealousy arises upon it every hour, and precautions of the strictest nature are taken; but what I have told you, be assured is correct from the fountain head. With respect to the Prince, I will give you my opinion to-morrow.

W. H. F.

MR. T. GRENVILLE TO EARL TEMPLE.

Dropmore, Nov. 6, 1810.

My dear Temple,

My brother's letter summoned me from Trentham hither, where I find him so overpowered with letters, that I have taken upon myself to write a line to you, although I know not exactly where you are. He desires me to tell you that he will be in town either on Friday, or at latest, on Saturday, the 10th, and that he hopes to find you in London, to talk over the important events that are now occurring. We know not of any material change at Windsor, except that there had been sleep on Sunday night for six hours, though no approach to reason had appeared. It seems to me probable that they will press for adjournment, particularly if any symptoms of commencing amendment can be held out. They may do pretty nearly what they please; for the public commiseration will be so generally and naturally excited by all the circumstances of this calamity, that the King's ministers will be more powerful than ever in all matters which have any reference to the malady of the King.

It is in my mind a great calamity which, in either result, either of recovery, or of protracted malady, must produce either a new burst of support to his Ministers, or such a Regency as would be neither advantageous, nor safe to assist in administering.

MR. W. H. FREMANTLE, M.P., TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Englefield Green, Nov. 7, 1810, Eight o'Clock.

My dear Lord,

The bulletin is altered in words, as you will have seen, but in fact there is no amendment; not the shadow of reason returned. About two hours sleep, and some potatoes as food. The pulse still beats eighty. If it is possible, the Ministers mean to propose another adjournment; but it will be most difficult, without an examination of physicians. The language here is, that he will be able to sign the warrant before the 15th, but even if he should have a certain degree of reason returned before that time, it will be a very bold step to risk the signature for fear of his afterwards relapsing. You may depend upon this fact, which I now repeat to you, that during the time of his most violent raving, his pulse has seldom exceeded eighty. I do not say that during his whole attack it has never been higher; it certainly has, but the malady has been most upon him when the pulse has not been so high. At present he is in a calmer state of mind—that is to say, he is more insensible to what passes—but his reason has not returned, unless it was reason to appear to wish to eat some more potatoes.

The conduct of the Prince is not that which can benefit his object at present; it professes not to interfere, at the same time expressing a wish and hope that his friends will support his object. No object can be supported unless it is avowed, and before the discussion takes place, it must be avowed in direct terms by him, or it will not be of any use. He has expressed and given authority for so doing and his abhorrence of the present men; but his resolution must be strengthened, or his object cannot be gained. As the discussion arises this must take place, for

it is quite impossible, when the discussion once takes place, and the heat and inflammation of party rises, but what he must take a part. At present he is determined that his people shall stay away; if so, there is no use in fighting the battle. All this is in the utmost confidence to you.

Lord Grenville goes to town Friday; if the business blows over, or there is an adjournment, he returns; if not, he stays.

I shall stay here, because I am sure I am of more use here, for information, to the last moment. I shall be up the 15th in the morning, or possibly the 14th, at night. You shall hear from me at Gosfield to-morrow.

Ever truly,
W. H. F.

Nov. 7, 1810, Two o'Clock.

I wrote in such a hurry last night, that I did not advert to your invitation to meet you at dinner. I am very sorry I cannot do so, but I cannot leave this neighbourhood, as I am daily in the habit of going over to Windsor, and giving the information which I pick up. I have not yet been to-day, but when I return, you shall have the true state by the post. With respect to the person* you alluded to, I very much agree with you, that he will want nerves; at present his language is, that he shall remain quiet, and take no steps at all till the whole thing is settled; but "he trusts his objects will be maintained by the Opposition." The natural observation to this is, how can those objects be known till he discloses them, or communicates with such as he chooses to place confidence in. He has communicated at D. but he is yet irresolute; one thing, however, I am assured of positively, that he is most disinclined to the present Ministers. Lord Grenville talks of being in town Friday or

* The Prince of Wales.

Saturday, if other people come; but it depends also upon the state of the King. The object of government is a further adjournment.

MR. W. H. FREMANTLE TO EARL TEMPLE.

Englefield Green, Nov. 11, 1810.

The account to me of yesterday (for to-day I have not seen one) was, "the King is certainly better. He has slept a good deal, his pulse is at 86, and he knew one of his attendants. The physicians are sanguine in his speedy recovery." This account, you may rest assured, is correct, and I therefore augur if matters are as promising to-day, that he will be considered as sufficiently recovering to justify a further adjournment, which, however, will be difficult I should imagine, without an examination in an open council.

All you say upon the subject of your line of conduct is most just and proper. Undoubtedly Lord Grenville is hampered, but viewing the times so different, the ages of the persons in question so advanced, and the nature of the government itself compared with that of '89, it certainly will enable him, if there should be a fair necessity for it, to soften the doctrine he then laid down. I think myself the thing will now blow over, because I think they will recover the King just enough to enable him to keep on this wretched government; but I have no idea that he will ever recover his strength and powers in any degree equal to what they have been. I think it will leave him perfectly imbecile, but such a state would be more favourable to Perceval and his colleagues.

The feuds and cabals at Windsor are rising every hour. The Prince of Wales, and the Duke of York are at daggers drawn, and all the Princes are violently angry at Willis having been sent by Perceval, without their advice, and directly contrary to their wishes. Should things go on not mending, you may rely upon my making known your views, and the necessity of some confidential opinion being made of the Prince of Wales' wishes. To you there can be no difficulty, because you are in no way

committed by former opinions. The fact is, if the thing goes on, he cannot help himself—for the moment Perceval has announced the views of government, it must of necessity bring him forward to resist them; for, be assured, the steps they will take, are directly similar to those of 1788. You shall hear to-morrow from me. It is unnecessary for me to write to your father to-day, as you will be so good as to give him my bulletin. I shall be in town on Thursday morning, and if you should be there, will call upon you.

Ever most truly yours.

EARL EUSTON TO EARL TEMPLE.

Wakefield Lodge, near Stony Stratford, Nov. 14.

My dear Lord,

From being but in the very commencement of convalescence from a fever of some duration, &c., I should have been unable to have borne the journey to town, if the business in parliament had been ever so pressing; but it would be extremely gratifying to me to know from such authority as yours something of the state of things; that is, of the real state of the King's health, and the probable course of proceedings in parliament; what Ministers are likely to propose, and what objections Opposition are likely to make to their plans; as one can scarcely imagine any measure of the present administration at all calculated to meet a great emergency.

Believe me, with sincere regard,

My dear Lord, yours most faithfully.

Euston.

EARL TEMPLE TO EARL EUSTON.

Grosvenor Street, Nov. 16, 1810.

My dear Lord,

The newspapers will have told you what passed yesterday in parliament. As it appeared that the King's state of health was

such as to enable the physicians to express a decided opinion that he was in a progressive state towards recovery, it was deemed more advisable, after much consideration, to acquiesce in the further adjournment; entering, however, a protest of the manner in which Ministers had broken through the precedent established by Mr. Pitt in 1788, when parliament was not called upon to act, until parliamentary ground had been laid by examination of physicians before the Privy Council for proceeding. Although certainly much mischief is done by permitting Ministers to establish so very unconstitutional a precedent, as the permitting a convention-parliament to pause one moment after the suspension of the royal authority was formally notified to it, in taking the necessary steps to complete the executive branch of the government, I am inclined to think you will approve—under all the circumstances of delicacy which peculiarly attend this case, and of the medical reports—of the line we have adopted. No time has been lost by it; and possibly much of weight in the public estimation has been gained. You will observe that Burdett puts himself forward as the opponent of the adjournment; and you probably will admit that this circumstance furnished a strong temptation to us, at least, to take the opposite course. Of the real state of the King's health, I only know that he has had lucid intervals, and that his paroxysms are not as violent. To my certain and positive knowledge, up to 12 o'clock the day before yesterday, he had the straight waistcoat continually on; but the sleeves not pulled down, except when the remedies were applied. Whether since that time it has been taken off, I know not.

Perceval and the Chancellor went down to Windsor yesterday, for the purpose of seeing the King; but this, his state of health did not enable them to do, and their information was collected only from the physicians. The general idea was, that he was worse yesterday. Of his recovery from this attack, to say the truth, I have little doubt; but it is matter of much more

serious, and much greater doubt to me, at what state of efficiency he can, at his age, and under all the circumstances of repeated attack and severe descipline, recover; or how, in this situation, his subjects are ever to know whether he recovers or not, or to what degree. At a moment like the present, we only wanted this event, and its protracted effects, to complete the dangers and difficulties of the country.

Circumstances change so much every hour, that it is impossible to look forward to what is likely to happen a fortnight hence. At all events, I trust that your health will permit you then to come up, unless events shall have so entirely altered before that time, as to make any further consideration upon this subject unnecessary. If the King's health does not materially improve before that period, your advice and assistance will become most necessary, as it will be difficult to bring oneself to admit that the country, in its present situation, can go on without any other representation of the Kingly authority, than that which is now found in the united wisdom of her Majesty's confidential servants.

Believe me always, with sincere regards.

Lord Temple's desire to take part in the grand struggle going on in the Peninsular, has already been stated; this had become so strong that he had availed himself of the friendship that had long existed between his family and that of one of the ablest members of the government, to make another confidential offer of his services, with the regiment of militia under his command. The reply proves, at least, that it was properly appreciated.

THE MARQUIS WELLESLEY TO EARL TEMPLE.

Apsley House, Nov. 19, 1810.

My Lord,

I have received the honour of your Lordship's letter of this date, and I regret extremely, that your Lordship should have misunderstood the cause of my silence on the subject of your Lordship's former communication.

I happened to be at Windsor, when that letter reached my house in town; but I communicated it on the next day to such of his Majesty's confidential servants, as were within my reach.

Your Lordship's offer was received by all those to whom it was imparted, with the warmest sense of the public spirit by which it was dictated; but, the state of our intelligence from Portugal did not, in my judgment, at that time admit of any distinct reply to your Lordship's proposal.

From that time, until Saturday last, I have remained in hourly expectation of receiving information, which might have enabled me, together with the acknowledgment of your Lordship's letter, to have transmitted an explicit answer to the offer which it contained.

This has been the real motive of my silence, which has certainly been protracted to a period of time, far beyond my wishes, or expectations. It is unnecessary to enumerate the various and unprecedented circumstances, which have so long interrupted our official intercourse with the army in Portugal. Your Lordship is probably informed, that from a just sense of the kind interest, which you have manifested for Lord Wellington's fame, as well as from motives of sincere personal regard for your Lordship, I had taken precautions to apprise you at the earliest moment of any decisive event which might occur in Portugal. I am satisfied that a moment's reflection must convince your Lordship, how irreconcileable such a mark of attention towards your Lordship

would have been to any other sentiments than those of the most friendly esteem.

Having examined the voluminous dispatches received from Portugal, on Saturday last, I can now state to your Lordship, (in the same private form of communication with which you have honoured me,) that no recommendation is likely to be submitted immediately to his Majesty, which would enable the government to avail itself of an offer so honourable to your Lordship's character.

I understood your Lordship to be particularly anxious, that your offer should not transpire, unless some prospect should open of carrying it into early effect; in this respect, I have strictly obeyed your Lordship's injunctions. Conceiving also, that the spirit of your Lordship's letter limited me to a private communication with his Majesty's confidential servants, I did not feel myself authorized to submit the proposal to the King.

If any alteration should hereafter have occurred in my view of the state of affairs in Portugal, which might have appeared to lead to the accomplishment of your Lordship's wishes for service, I should not have failed to make the earliest confidential communication to your Lordship. The last paragraph of your Lordship's letter of this date, must of necessity preclude me from taking such a liberty, whatever may be the result of affairs in Portugal.

I have the honour to be,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient and most humble servant,

WELLESLEY.

Intelligence of the brightening prospects of our Peninsular army, now placed before the reader, is of the highest authority and of very great interest.

LORD WELLINGTON TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Castano, Dec. 7, 1810.

MY DEAR LORD,

I received your letter of the 27th October, for which I am much obliged to you. It will always give me the greatest satisfaction to receive your approbation; and I trust that you will approve of the caution with which I have contrived to carry on my operations to the present day. Indeed, the caution of my opponent, renders caution on my part doubly necessary, considering that I am at the head of the only army remaining in the Peninsula—or, I believe, in Europe—that is capable and willing to contend with the French.

I am under no apprehensions of the result of an action, for I'll take care not to fight one, unless I can choose the ground for it. My opponent appears to have come to the same determination; but I hope before long, if the weather will hold up so as to enable me to use the cross roads, that I shall dislodge him by the operations of the peasantry and the light troops. You can have no idea what a superiority we have assumed over this once formidable army, and the confidence which we all feel, that we shall yet save this country from the general wreck.

Lord George is at Cadiz amusing himself with the gun-boats there, I understand. As he is neither soldier nor sailor, I recommend to your Lordship to discourage his visits to fleets and armies engaged in operations, in future. It is quite impossible to keep an amateur like him out of harm's way; and I assure you that, although I derived much pleasure from his society while he was with the army, I was not sorry when he went away. He left me a fine grey mare to be sent to you as soon as she should recover from a fever to which all the horses in this country are liable. She was tolerably well, and I sent her to Lisbon about a fortnight ago to go to England by the first opportunity, which

I believe will offer now in a few days. But either I or Admiral Berkeley will write to you when she will be embarked.

I beg you to present my best respects to Lady Buckingham, and Lady Mary, and Lord and Lady Temple, and believe me,

My dear Lord,

Your most obliged and affectionate servant,

WELLINGTON.

The true position of the King was now becoming generally known, notwithstanding strenuous efforts of his Ministers at concealment; *their* true position was also escaping from various official channels. The ferment in the public mind daily grew more intense; every one seemed embarrassed with this overwhelming difficulty, and the proceedings of government failed to lessen the confusion. They will be found detailed with remarkable accuracy, in one of those confidential expositions, that were forwarded to Stowe from time to time.

LORD GRENVILLE TO EARL TEMPLE.

Dropmore, Nov. 30.

MY DEAR TEMPLE,

You will probably have heard something of the state of things at Windsor, but you will not, perhaps, have seen any accurate account. There has been ever since Thursday last, a decided attack of the former unhappy malady. And the accounts of yesterday were not better. The Ministers have been formally apprised of it, and the Chancellor and Perceval were to be at Windsor yesterday. What they did, I know not. If the malady continues, parliament must meet in November, as it did in '88, for there is no power to make any further prorogation. If I hear anything material, I will let you know it, but the whole thing

will, I doubt not, immediately be public, and the newspapers will then know as much or more than I can.

Ever most affectionately yours,

G.

MR. W. H. FREMANTLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Englefield Green, Dec. 7, 1810.

My dear Lord,

You may depend upon it, there is no truth whatever in the report of the fainting fits. He was certainly a great deal worse Wednesday evening, and all yesterday; but he has again been reduced by medicine, and is more composed to-day. Last night he had three and a half hour's sleep. The confidence of the physicians still is unbounded, and they hesitate not still in saying he will speedily recover. The great object is, that he should see his Ministers before Thursday. I should imagine this is now impossible; but every exertion is making for this attempt, which will be tried if possible. His bodily strength is improved, and appetite unbounded; indeed, it is said his over-eating meat created the fever on Wednesday. From all I learn, I cannot hesitate in believing him to be much better, both in mind, body, and strength; though it would not surprise me to hear he had relapsed in the former.

Willis is very angry with the other physicians, whom he charges with impeding the recovery, by interfering too much, and conversing with him. This shows how little his mind is capable of converse.

If anything occurs of interest, you shall hear from me. Let me know if you are leaving town. I am glad to hear your gout is gone.

Ever most truly yours,

W. H. F.

The Prince was at Windsor yesterday for a few hours, in very bad humour.

LORD GRENVILLE TO EARL TEMPLE.

Dropmore, Dec. 9, 1810.

My dear Temple,

I am much obliged to you for the kindness of your letter, but I really think that your attendance must depend entirely on your own idea of your situation in the House of Commons. That there is no good to be done by any attendance there, I am most fully persuaded. It is against my own inclination, and I might almost say, against my judgment that I go to the House of Lords; not because I believe I can do any good there, but because I do not choose to appear to shrink from the discharge of my unpleasant duties. As for political views, I have none; and form no other wish than that I may be able to keep at a great distance from all Courts, new or old; and yet I fear even this will not be allowed to me.

The accounts from Windsor are you see, again less favourable. What that of to-day is, I know not.

Ever most affectionately yours.

G.

——— TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

December 19, 1810.

I was in town on Monday evening, and a great part of yesterday, during which period, I endeavoured, as far as lay in my power, to learn what were the actual feelings, and what the hopes and expectations of the present people in power, in the present emergency. On Monday, there generally prevailed an opinion among their partizans, that the Prince would take the government upon any terms of their dictation, that no material change could take place in the government, and that his Royal

Highness had disgusted his old friends by the part he had hitherto taken, in consequence of which, Lord Grey had gone to the north in thorough ill-humour. In short, that there would be no opposition whatever to their plans.

The debate of that night, however, has made a woeful alteration in those air-born speculations, and I witnessed myself, yesterday morning, no small share of their dismay and consternation. Instead of the utmost confidence in carrying their measure of Thursday evening next triumphantly, they are very doubtful of even a bare majority! Expresses were yesterday sent in every direction to call in "the lame, the blind, and the halt." In short, the strongest muster they can possibly make, will, they are fearful, hardly achieve their purpose.

Their expectation of opposition in so formidable a degree, is bottomed principally upon the Prince's friends having at length spoken out; and secondly, upon public opinion, which they cannot disguise from themselves, is unequivocally favourable to any change which would give the country an efficient executive branch of the constitution. Much of the strength of parliament will be necessarily guided by those two causes. Next the ancient and usual practise in such a crisis as the present, of "ratting," more particularly among the Irish members, where the defection is already known to be formidable, will undoubtedly thin their ranks; and finally the strongest apprehensions are entertained from the possibility, not to say probability of the Sieur Canning, and those whom he influences, turning short round upon them. Their apprehension of the latter event arises from the following grounds of belief.

The conduct of Lord Sidmouth and his friends, since the notoriety of the King's illness, brought about new overtures (through Lord Buckinghamshire) to take him and Lord Castlereagh into the government; but they fell to the ground, by Lord Wellesley steadily persisting in his declaration, that if any other person were taken in, Canning must. Upon the principles

I have more than once had occasion to explain to your Lordship, both Sidmouth and Castlereagh refused to act with Canning—the whole, therefore, fell to the ground. Enough of good humour, however, was induced by the negotiation, to keep Lords Sidmouth and Castlereagh in co-operation with Ministers; and no doubts are entertained as with respect to them; but far differently as with regard to Canning. Before he went last to Leicestershire, he was daily a visitor at Apsley House. Since his coming to town, upon the spur of the present proceedings, he has kept quite aloof; even so far as not once to call there, nor even return a visit paid him by its noble owner! This certainly not only looks, but is felt as suspicious. His votes in the Commons are—his own, Lord Leveson Gower, Sturges Bourne, Huskisson, young Canning, and (it is said) the Master of the Rolls—a phalanx not to be despised, either for numbers or abilities, or weight in the country, when parliamentary opinions are nearly balanced.

Their line of argument on Thursday evening will run chiefly on the unanimous testimony of the physicians as to the unimpaired constitution of the King, the probability of his living many more years, and of his perfect recovery. An endeavour to excite individual feeling in his behalf, and finally, the attempt to place those in a dilemma, who acted with Mr. Pitt in 1788, in which latter they will be assisted by Mr. Sheridan's (in my opinion) injudicious reference to the address of the Irish parliament on that occasion, as a proper precedent to be followed on the present.

On the whole, taking all the circumstances together into consideration, I am positive that Ministers have overshot themselves in their late view of things. Led on by the conduct of the Prince's people in the first instance, they misconstrued it into a thorough submission to their terms, instead of considering it as an overture, for which I firmly believe it was meant; and in the hopes of still keeping their power under a limited regent, and their character of consistency and attachment to the King in-

violable, they suffered things to take their own course, instead of meeting him half way. The opportunity is now lost. They have thrown him back upon his own friends, and will throw into parliament and the constitution that power, I really think they might, by better management, have kept to themselves.

I am ashamed to have thus troubled your Lordship with my conjectures, but they arise out of facts which I should find extremely difficult to detail; but, the impressions they have made upon my mind are indelible and irresistable.

I have seen extracts from the last confidential letters of Lord Wellington. He writes in the best possible spirits:—"Massena cannot be extricated from his present situation, but by a general action, and that a greatly successful one, with the allied armies, which battle shall be fought upon his (Lord Wellington's) ground, and not on Massena's."

It is singular, that he asks for no fresh troops, although he had received the last government dispatches, apprising him of there being 9000 fire-locks at his command from this country, when he chose to ask for them. In truth, besides no small difficulty in maintaining a greater army than he has at present, to pay more, from the impossibility of procuring dollars or bullion in the present moment, is out of the question. He has been joined by 3000 men from Sicily, by this time, however.

Of Drouet's corps, he says, the whole are about 15,000 men, of whom 8000 had actually joined Massena—the remainder were foreign troops of the worst description, therefore were afraid to bring them even into Portugal, apprehensive of desertion, &c.

He adds, that he is entirely master of his own game, out of which nothing shall drive him, and that he looks to the happiest results, which God grant.

Lord Wellington's dispatches come as low as the 29th. His private letters are written in the highest spirits, and have had

that effect on Lord Wellesley, &c. From the uneasy movements in the French quarters, as well as the information derived from deserters, added to the positive knowledge of the deep distress of Massena for every article of the first necessity, Lord Wellesley looks either for an attack from the enemy, or his breaking up for the frontiers almost immediately. In either event, Lord Wellington looks with perfect confidence to the destruction of one-half of the French army, at least; such are nearly his words: "For his own conduct, it has been regulated by the great responsibility he holds, as being at the head of the last army on the Peninsula; by that army consisting of a mixed description of troops; and the great reputation and real talent of the enemy he has had to cope with. In that view he has hazarded, and will hazard, nothing; but persevere in pressing upon him with his flanks, and keeping a steady and formidable front opposed to him."

I have no doubt, on my mind, that the above developement of Lord Wellington's present plans has been drawn from him by the pressing advice he has received from this country, to lose no time in striking a decisive blow; advice which may easily be traced to the political emergencies of the present moment. His conduct, in my opinion, does him the highest credit, both as an honest man, and a great soldier.

There is no doubt of Drouet having joined Massena, with about 15,000 men. What is of more consequence is, that Lord Wellington has every reason to believe that Bonaparte has ordered his armies in the South of Spain to break up the operations before Cadiz, and to move upon Portugal by the southern route; a measure which, while it would at once relieve a third part of Spain from French occupancy, and would be, in all probability, destructive to their interests in that quarter, is an event for which Lord Wellington expresses himself "perfectly prepared." He has written for the long withheld reinforcements, nearly nine thousand men, and they are, or a great proportion

of them, under orders for Portugal at this moment, from the country.

I think it necessary, also, that your Lordship should not, at this moment, be unacquainted with Lord Wellesley's having positively refused any accommodation with the American Minister upon the subject of the orders in council, which, of course, will not now be revoked. This ultimatum was delivered, ten days back, to Mr. Pinckney. Lord Wellesley's note waives all the controversial topics with which Mr. Pinckney's are fraught. He says "that had the American requisitions been strictly confined to the repeal of the orders of council, they might have been listened to with every chance of accommodation; but as they were also mixed up with the complex questions of contraband of war, the system of blockade, and the new commercial canon of free bottoms making free goods, they could not in this view be complied with." Such is, at least, the substance of this important note, to which no answer has since been returned.

Pinckney, who was at first all sweetness and complaisance, has recently exhibited in his communications with Lord Wellesley, an ample measure of republican insolence.

The morning of my last troubling your Lordship, Lord Wellesley was full charged and primed for speaking in the House of Lords. That he did not do so, has laid up for him inexhaustible mortification and self-reproach. His colleagues openly talk of his failing them in this dangerous conjunction. His friends consider him as gone by as a public man; and the multitude, judging from his visit to the Prince, consider him as a rat and a deserter of the worst kind; while he himself finds that even in the event of the King's recovery, in the eyes of the latter, his conduct must appear utterly inexcusable. In the meanwhile, the real truth is far otherwise. No being living, to my knowledge, was more anxious to play his part, upon this occasion, as an inheritor of Mr. Pitt's system, and as a personal friend to the

King, than he was. His visit to the Prince was unofficial, and marked by harshness and ill-humour on both sides. His preparation was ample and complete; and his views of the whole Regency question, squared to a tittle with those of his brother Ministers. In fact, he was unable; his powers of mind failed him, and his nerves were unequal to the task he had imposed upon himself.

To those who are most interested about Lord Wellesley, the above is a species of *défaillance* more alarming than even the verification of the worst suggestions of his enemies. It augurs *"un homme passé;"* and what is the most dangerous symptom of the whole, is that he entirely agrees with them in the opinion. All this is to be retrieved, if it can be retrieved, during the progress of the Regency Bill, when he will, if he can, in reply to Lord Grey, take an opportunity of going over the whole question in the fullest detail, and unequivocally declaring his opinions thereon. Such are, at least, his present pledges to his friends.

Of the King's health, my intelligence is of course *ex parte*, and I know from what is passed, is very little to be depended upon. It is, however, that no "paroxysm" took place in consequence of his "bad night," of Tuesday last, but that his illness was produced by constipation of the bowels, which effect ceased with the cause. His general health is stated to be admirable, and his return to perfect soundness gradual but satisfactory; and R. Willis speaks of its certainty and durability with a confidence, which satisfies the government, at least. He has named six weeks hence for the probable period of his malady. Be all this as it may, of this I am certain, the public will not tolerate half measures on this subject.

The proceedings in parliament since the 1st of November, were of deep and painful interest. In consequence of the

condition of the King, both Houses met only to adjourn for a fortnight. On the 15th, they re-assembled, and Ministers, by expressing confident hopes of his Majesty speedy recovery, were able to adjourn for another fortnight; but not without opposition, especially in the Commons, which divided on the question, though with an overwhelming majority in favour of Ministers. They met again on the 29th, when more confident hopes were expressed, and a third adjournment proposed; which also was received with considerable, though unavailing opposition. On the 13th of December, they assembled for the third time, when a motion for examining the King's physicians, was proposed and carried. On the 19th, Lord Grenville, in the House of Lords, called the government to task for unnecessarily delaying to inform the country of the King's illness, and recommended that the evil under which the nation laboured should be remedied by an act of the legislature; to which Lord Holland expressed his entire concurrence. On the following day, when the report of the committee, appointed to examine the physicians, was brought up by Earl Camden, further discussion ensued; while on the same day, when the Lower House resolved itself into a Committee on the state of the nation, an animated and most important debate ensued, on certain propositions enunciated by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, relative to the interruption of the regal functions, the propriety of the legislature suggesting a remedy, and that enactments for that object should be at once brought under its consideration. The Prince of Wales was then proposed as Regent, during the King's indisposition, and

the Queen as Custodian of the King's person. Among the speakers who took part in this debate, were Lord Temple, Lord Castlereagh, Sir Francis Burdett, Messrs. Ponsonby, Whitbread, Canning, Croker, Adam, Horner, and the Attorney and Solicitor-General; there was a division, when the government mustered 269, and the Opposition 157. When the report was brought up on the next day, another animated debate ensued, followed by a second division, in which the government in a small House had a majority of six to one. On the 27th, the same subject was debated in the House of Lords, when Lord Grenville made an eloquent and impressive speech in favour of the five resolutions submitted to the House by government, which, notwithstanding an amendment having been put forward, were carried by a majority of 26. The debate was renewed on the following day, when another amendment was negatived without a division. In the House of Commons, on the 31st, there was again a lively discussion on the resolutions proposed by government, which Mr. Canning strongly opposed, and Lord Castlereagh as strongly defended; an amendment was rejected by 224 to 200, and four of the resolutions then carried by still smaller majorities, except the fourth, for securing the private property of the King, which was agreed to without a division.

The year closed before the arrangements for supplying the deficiency in the machinery of the state were completed; but it was now evident to the world, that George the Third had, to all kingly intents, ceased to govern, though his reign could not be said to have terminated.

He lived, and it was hoped might, as had been the case in more than one visitation of the same nature, be restored to his reason, and resume his regal functions. His position excited the deepest sympathy of an entire and loyal people, except among a small section, who affected republicanism, and the still more selfish group, who, in the eagerness of their worship of the rising sun, forgot their obligations to the light which for so many years had warmed them with its brilliancy, and had but so recently been eclipsed.

THE END.

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